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The adventures of Oliver Twist. Abridged

Charles Dickens

George Cruikshank

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OF
OLIVER TWIST.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

ABRIDGED FOR USE IN SCHOOLS.

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OLIVER TWIST.

INTRODUCTORY.

[OLIVER TWIST was born in the workhouse, where his mother, friendless and ill, had taken refuge. She died almost as soon as her child was born, and the little orphan was thus left entirely to the care of the parish,—“to be cuffed and buffeted through the world.”]

I. EARLY YEARS.

THE parish authorities resolved that Oliver should be “farmed,” or, in other words, that he should be despatched to a branch-workhouse some three miles off, where twenty or thirty other juvenile offenders against the poor-laws rolled about the floor all day, without the inconvenience of too much food or too much clothing, under the parental superintendence of an elderly female, who received the culprits at and for the consideration of sevenpence-half-penny per small head per week.

It cannot be expected that this system of farming would produce any very luxuriant crop. Oliver Twist’s ninth birth-day found him a pale, thin child. But nature had implanted a good sturdy spirit in Oliver’s breast. It had had plenty of room to expand, thanks to the spare diet of the establishment; and perhaps to this circumstance may be attributed his having any ninth birth-day at all.

Be this as it may, however, it *was* his ninth birth-day; and he was keeping it in the coal-cellar with a select party of two other young gentlemen, who, after participating with him in a sound thrashing, had been locked up therein for presuming to be hungry, when Mrs. Mann, the good lady of the house, was unexpectedly startled by the apparition of Mr. Bumble, the beadle, striving to undo the wicket of the garden-gate.

"Goodness gracious! is it you, Mr. Bumble, sir?" said Mrs. Mann, thrusting her head out of the window. "(Susan, take Oliver and them two brats upstairs, and wash 'em directly.)—My heart alive! Mr. Bumble, how glad I am to see you, sure-ly!"

Now Mr. Bumble, instead of responding to this open-hearted salutation in a kindred spirit, gave the little wicket a tremendous shake, and then bestowed upon it a kick.

"Only think," said Mrs. Mann, running out,—for the three boys had been removed by this time,—“only think of that! That I should have forgotten that the gate was bolted on the inside, on account of the dear children! Walk in, sir; walk in, pray, Mr. Bumble, do, sir.”

"Do you think this respectful or proper conduct, Mrs. Mann," inquired Mr. Bumble, "to keep the parish officers a waiting at your garden gate, when they come?"

"I'm sure, Mr. Bumble, that I was only a telling one or two of the dear children as is so fond of you, that it was you a coming," replied Mrs. Mann, with great humility.

"Well, well, Mrs. Mann," he replied in a calmer tone; "it may be as you say; it may be. Lead the way in, Mrs. Mann, for I come on business, and have something to say."

Mrs. Mann ushered the beadle into a small parlour with a brick floor; placed a seat for him; and deposited his cocked hat and cane on the table before him. Mr. Bumble

wiped the perspiration from his forehead ; glanced at the cocked hat ; and smiled. Yes, he smiled. Beadles are but men : and Mr. Bumble smiled.

II. A CHANGE FOR OLIVER.

"AND now about business," said the beadle, taking out a leathern pocket-book. "The child that was half-baptised Oliver Twist, is nine year old to-day."

"Bless him !" interposed Mrs. Mann, inflaming her left eye with the corner of her apron.

"And notwithstanding an offered reward of ten pound," said Bumble, "we have never been able to discover who is his father, or what was his mother's settlement, name, or condition."

Mrs. Mann raised her hands in astonishment.

"Oliver being now too old to remain here, the board have determined to have him back into the house. I have come out myself to take him there. So let me see him at once."

"I'll fetch him directly," said Mrs. Mann, leaving the room for that purpose. Oliver, having had by this time as much of the outer coat of dirt removed as could be scrubbed off in one washing, was led into the room.

"Make a bow to the gentleman, Oliver," said Mrs. Mann.

Oliver made a bow, which was divided between the beadle on the chair, and the cocked hat on the table.

"Will you go along with me, Oliver ?" said Mr. Bumble, in a majestic voice.

Oliver was about to say that he would go along with anybody with great readiness, when, glancing upwards,

he caught sight of Mrs. Mann, who had got behind the beadle's chair, and was shaking her fist at him with a furious countenance. He took the hint at once, for the fist had been too often impressed upon his body not to be deeply impressed upon his recollection.

"Will *she* go with me?" inquired poor Oliver.

"No, she can't," replied Mr. Bumble. "But she'll come and see you sometimes."

This was no very great consolation to the child. Young as he was, however, he had sense enough to make a feint of feeling great regret at going away.

It was no very difficult matter for the boy to call the tears into his eyes. Hunger and recent ill-usage are great assistants if you want to cry; and Oliver cried very naturally indeed. Mrs. Mann gave him a thousand embraces, and, what Oliver wanted a great deal more, a piece of bread and butter, lest he should seem too hungry when he got to the workhouse.

With the slice of bread in his hand, and the little brown-cloth parish cap on his head, Oliver was then led away by Mr. Bumble from the wretched home, where one kind word or look had never lighted the gloom of his infant years. And yet he burst into an agony of childish grief, as the cottage-gate closed after him.

Wretched as were the little companions in misery he was leaving behind, they were the only friends he had ever known; and a sense of his loneliness in the great wide world, sank into the child's heart for the first time.

Mr. Bumble walked on with long strides; little Oliver, firmly grasping his gold-laced cuff, trotted beside him; inquiring at the end of every quarter of a mile whether they were "nearly there."

III. OLIVER BEFORE "THE BOARD."

OLIVER had not been within the walls of the workhouse a quarter of an hour, when Mr. Bumble, who had handed him over to the care of an old woman, returned; and, telling him it was a board night, informed him that the board had said he was to appear before it forthwith.

Not having a very clear notion of what a live board was, Oliver was rather astounded by this intelligence, and was not quite certain whether he ought to laugh or cry.

He had no time to think about the matter, however; for Mr. Bumble gave him a tap on the head, with his cane, to wake him up: and another on the back to make him lively: and, bidding him follow, conducted him into a large whitewashed room, where eight or ten fat gentlemen were sitting round a table. At the top of the table, seated in an arm-chair rather higher than the rest, was a particularly fat gentleman, with a very round, red face.

"Bow to the board," said Bumble. Oliver brushed away two or three tears that were lingering in his eyes; and seeing no board but the table, fortunately bowed to that.

"What's your name, boy?" said the gentleman in the high chair.

Oliver was frightened at the sight of so many gentlemen, which made him tremble; and the beadle gave him another tap behind, which made him cry. These two causes made him answer in a very low and hesitating voice; whereupon a gentleman in a white waistcoat said he was a fool. Which was a capital way of raising his spirits, and putting him quite at his ease.

"Boy," said the gentleman in the high chair, "listen to me. You know you're an orphan, I suppose?"

"What's that, sir?" inquired poor Oliver.

"The boy *is* a fool—I thought he was," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

"Hush!" said the gentleman who had spoken first. "You know you've got no father or mother, and that you were brought up by the parish, don't you?"

"Yes, sir," replied Oliver, weeping bitterly.

"What are you crying for?" inquired the gentleman in the white waistcoat. And to be sure it was very extraordinary. What *could* the boy be crying for?

"I hope you say your prayers every night," said another gentleman in a gruff voice; "and pray for the people who feed you, and take care of you—like a Christian."

"Yes, sir," stammered the boy. The gentleman who spoke last was unconsciously right. It would have been *very* like a Christian, and a marvellously good Christian, too, if Oliver had prayed for the people who fed and took care of *him*. But he hadn't, because nobody had taught him.

"Well! You have come here to be educated and taught a useful trade," said the red-faced gentleman in the high chair.

"So you'll begin to pick oakum to-morrow morning at six o'clock," added the surly one in the white waistcoat.

Oliver bowed low by the direction of the beadle, and was then hurried away to a large ward: where, on a rough, hard bed, he sobbed himself to sleep. What a noble illustration of the tender laws of England! They let the paupers go to sleep!

IV. OLIVER ASKS FOR MORE.

THE room in which the boys were fed was a large stone hall, with a copper at one end: out of which the master, dressed in an apron for the purpose, and assisted by one or two women, ladled the gruel at meal-times. Of this each

boy had one porringer, and no more—except on occasions of great public rejoicing, when he had two ounces and a quarter of bread besides.

The bowls never wanted washing. The boys polished them with their spoons till they shone again; and when they had performed this operation, (which never took very long, the spoons being nearly as large as the bowls,) they would sit staring at the copper, with such eager eyes, as if they could have devoured the very bricks of which it was composed; employing themselves meanwhile in sucking their fingers, with the view of catching up any stray splashes of gruel that might have been cast thereon.

Boys have generally excellent appetites. Oliver Twist and his companions suffered slow starvation for three months: at last they got so wild with hunger, that one boy hinted darkly to his companions, that unless he had another basin of gruel *per diem*, he was afraid he might some night happen to eat the boy who slept next him, who happened to be a weakly youth of tender age. He had a wild, hungry eye; and they believed him.

A council was held; lots were cast who should walk up to the master after supper that evening, and ask for more; and it fell to Oliver Twist.

The evening arrived; the boys took their places. The master, in his cook's uniform, stationed himself at the copper; his pauper assistants ranged themselves behind him; the gruel was served out; and a long grace was said over the short commons.

The gruel disappeared; the boys whispered each other, and winked at Oliver; while his next neighbours nudged him. Child as he was, he was desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery. He rose from the table; and advancing to the master, basin and spoon in hand, said: somewhat alarmed at his own temerity:

"Please, sir, I want some more."

The master was a fat, healthy man; but he turned very



OLIVER ASKS FOR MORE.

pale. He gazed in stupefied astonishment on the small rebel for some seconds; and then clung for support to the

copper. The assistants were paralysed with wonder; the boys with fear.

"What!" said the master at length, in a faint voice.

"Please, sir," replied Oliver, "I want some more."

The master aimed a blow at Oliver's head with the ladle; pinioned him in his arms; and shrieked aloud for the beadle.

The board were sitting in solemn conclave, when Mr. Bumble rushed into the room in great excitement, and addressing the gentleman in the high chair, said:

"Mr. Limbkins, I beg your pardon, sir! Oliver Twist has asked for more!"

There was a general start. Horror was depicted on every countenance.

"For *more!*" said Mr. Limbkins. "Compose yourself, Bumble, and answer me distinctly. Do I understand that he asked for more supper?"

"He did, sir," replied Bumble.

"That boy will be hung," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. "I know that boy will be hung."

Oliver was ordered into instant confinement; and a bill was next morning pasted on the outside of the gate, offering a reward of five pounds to anybody who would take Oliver Twist off the hands of the parish. In other words, five pounds and Oliver Twist were offered to any man or woman who wanted an apprentice to any trade, business, or calling.

"I never was more convinced of anything in my life," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat, as he knocked at the gate and read the bill next morning: "I never was more convinced of anything in my life, than I am that that boy will come to be hung."

V. MR. GAMFIELD.

FOR a week after the commission of the offence of asking for more, Oliver remained a close prisoner in the dark room to which he had been consigned by the wisdom and mercy of the board.

He cried bitterly all day; and when the long, dismal night came on, he spread his little hands before his eyes to shut out the darkness, and crouching in the corner, tried to sleep: ever and anon waking with a start and tremble, and drawing himself closer and closer to the wall, as if to feel even its cold hard surface were a protection in the gloom and loneliness which surrounded him.

He was carried every other day into the hall where the boys dined, and there flogged, as a public warning and example.

It chanced one morning that Mr. Gamfield, chimney-sweeper, was wending his way adown the High-street, when, passing the workhouse, his eyes encountered the bill on the gate.

"Wo—o!" said Mr. Gamfield to the donkey.

The donkey, without noticing the word of command, jogged onward.

Mr. Gamfield, running after him, bestowed a blow on his head, which would have beaten in any skull but a donkey's. Then, catching hold of the bridle, he gave his jaw a sharp wrench, by way of gentle reminder that he was not his own master; and by these means turned him round. He then gave him another blow on the head, just to stun him till he came back again. Having completed these arrangements, he walked up to the gate, to read the bill.

The gentleman with the white waistcoat was standing at

the gate. Having witnessed the little dispute between Mr. Gamfield and the donkey, he smiled joyously when that person came up to read the bill, for he saw at once that Mr. Gamfield was exactly the sort of master Oliver Twist wanted.

Mr. Gamfield smiled, too, as he perused the document; for five pounds was just the sum he had been wishing for; and, as to the boy, Mr. Gamfield, knowing what the dietary of the workhouse was, well knew he would be a nice small pattern, just the very thing for register stoves.

"This here boy, sir, wot the parish wants to 'prentis," said Mr. Gamfield.

"Ay, my man," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat, with a condescending smile. "What of him?"

"If the parish would like him to learn a light pleasant trade, in a good 'spectable chimbley-sweepin' business," said Mr. Gamfield, "I wants a 'prentice, and I'm ready to take him."

"Walk in," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. Mr. Gamfield having lingered behind, to give the donkey another blow on the head, and another wrench of the jaw, as a caution not to run away in his absence, followed the gentleman with the white waistcoat into the room where Oliver had first seen him.

"It's a nasty trade," said Mr. Limbkins, when Gamfield had again stated his wish.

"Young boys have been smothered in chimneys before now," said another gentleman.

The board then proceeded to converse among themselves for a few minutes. At length the whispering ceased, and Mr. Limbkins said:

"We have considered your proposition, and we don't approve of it.

"Not at all," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

"Decidedly not," added the other members.

As Mr. Gamfield did happen to labour under the imputation of having bruised three or four boys to death already, it occurred to him that the board had perhaps taken it into their heads that this circumstance ought to influence their proceedings. He twisted his cap in his hands, and walked slowly from the table.

"So you won't let me have him, gen'lmen?" said Mr. Gamfield, pausing near the door.

"No," replied Mr. Limbkins; "at least, as it's a nasty business, we think you ought to take something less than the premium we offered."

Mr. Gamfield's countenance brightened, as, with a quick step, he returned to the table, and said:

"What'll you give, gen'lmen? Come! Don't be too hard on a poor man. What'll you give?"

"I should say three pound ten was plenty," said Mr. Limbkins.

"You're hard upon me, gen'lmen," said Mr. Gamfield, wavering.

"Pooh! pooh! nonsense!" said the gentleman in the white waistcoat. "He'd be cheap with nothing at all as a premium. Take him, you silly fellow! He's just the boy for you. He wants the stick, now and then: it'll do him good; and his board needn't come very expensive, for he hasn't been overfed since he was born. Ha! ha! ha!"

Mr. Gamfield gave an arch look at the faces round the table, and, observing a smile on all of them, gradually broke into a smile himself. The bargain was made. Mr. Bumble was at once instructed that Oliver Twist and his indentures were to be conveyed before the magistrate, for signature and approval, that very afternoon.

VI. OLIVER ALMOST APPRENTICED.

LITTLE Oliver, to his astonishment, was released from bondage, and ordered to put himself into a clean shirt. Mr. Bumble brought him, with his own hands, a basin of gruel, and the holiday allowance of two ounces and a quarter of bread. At this tremendous sight, Oliver began to cry very piteously: thinking, not unnaturally, that the board must have determined to kill him for some useful purpose, or they never would have begun to fatten him up in that way.

"Don't make your eyes red, Oliver, but eat your food and be thankful," said Mr. Bumble. "You're going to be made a 'prentice of, Oliver."

"A 'prentice, sir!" said the child, trembling.

"Yes, Oliver," said Mr. Bumble. "The kind gentlemen are going to 'prentice you, and to set you up in life, and make a man of you: although the expense to the parish is three pound ten!—three pound ten, Oliver!—seventy shillin's—one hundred and forty sixpences!—and all for a naughty orphan!"

The tears rolled down the poor child's face, and he sobbed bitterly.

"Come," said Mr. Bumble, "wipe your eyes with the cuffs of your jacket, and don't cry into your gruel; that's a very foolish action, Oliver." It certainly was, for there was quite enough water in it already.

On their way to the magistrate, Mr. Bumble instructed Oliver that all he would have to do, would be to look very happy, and say, when the gentleman asked him if he wanted to be apprenticed, that he should like it very much indeed. When they arrived at the office, Mr. Bumble led

him into a large room. Behind a desk sat two old gentlemen with powdered heads, one of whom was perusing a small piece of parchment which lay before him. Mr. Limbkins was standing in front of the desk on one side; and Mr. Gamfield, with a partially-washed face, on the other.

"This is the boy, your worship," said Mr. Bumble.

"Oh, is this the boy?" said the old gentleman.

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. Bumble. "Bow to the magistrate, my dear."

Oliver roused himself, and made his best obeisance.

"Well," said the old gentleman, "I suppose he's fond of chimney-sweeping?"

"He dotes on it, your worship," replied Bumble: giving Oliver a sly pinch, to intimate that he had better not say he didn't.

"And he *will* be a sweep, will he?" inquired the old gentleman.

"If we were to bind him to any other trade to-morrow, he'd run away, your worship," replied Bumble.

"And this man that's to be his master—you, sir—you'll treat him well, and feed him, and do all that sort of thing,—will you?" said the old gentleman.

"When I says I will, I means I will," replied Mr. Gamfield doggedly.

"I have no doubt, my friend," replied the old gentleman: fixing his spectacles more firmly on his nose, and looking about him for the inkstand.

VII. BUT NOT QUITE.

It was the critical moment of Oliver's fate. If the inkstand had been where the old gentleman thought it was, he would have dipped his pen into it, and signed the inden-

turns; and Oliver would have been straightway hurried off. But, as it chanced to be immediately under his nose, it followed, as a matter of course, that he looked all over his desk for it, without finding it; and, happening in the course of his search to look straight before him, his gaze encountered the pale and terrified face of Oliver Twist; who, despite all the looks and pinches of Bumble, was regarding the repulsive countenance of his future master with horror and fear.

The old gentleman stopped, laid down his pen, and looked from Oliver to Mr. Limbkins: who attempted to take snuff with a cheerful and unconcerned aspect.

"My boy!" said the old gentleman, leaning over the desk. Oliver started at the sound. He might be excused for doing so; for the words were kindly said; and strange sounds frighten one. He trembled violently, and burst into tears.

"My boy!" said the old gentleman, "you look pale and alarmed. What is the matter? Stand a little away from him, Beadle. Now, boy, tell us what's the matter: don't be afraid."

Oliver fell on his knees, and clasping his hands together, prayed that they would order him back to the dark room—that they would starve him—beat him—kill him if they pleased—rather than send him away with that dreadful man.

"Well!" said Mr. Bumble, raising his hands and eyes with most impressive solemnity. "Well! of all the artful orphans that ever I see, Oliver, you are one of the most bare-facedest."

"Hold your tongue, Beadle," said the old gentleman.

"I beg your worship's pardon," said Mr. Bumble.

"Did your worship speak to me?"

"Yes. Hold your tongue."

Mr. Bumble was stupefied with astonishment. A beadle ordered to hold his tongue!



OLIVER'S APPEAL TO THE MAGISTRATE.

The old gentleman looked at his companion he nodded significantly.

"We refuse to sanction these indentures," said the old gentleman: tossing aside the piece of parchment as he spoke. "Take the boy back to the workhouse, and treat him kindly. He seems to want it."

The next morning, the public were once more informed that Oliver Twist was again To Let; and that five pounds would be paid to anybody who would take possession of him.

VIII. ANOTHER PLACE OFFERS.

MR. BUMBLE had been despatched to make various inquiries, with the view of finding out some captain or other who wanted a cabin-boy without any friends; and was returning to the workhouse; when he encountered, just at the gate, no less a person than Mr. Sowerberry, the parochial undertaker.

"By-the-bye," said Mr. Bumble, "you don't know anybody who wants a boy, do you? Liberal terms, Mr. Sowerberry, liberal terms!" As Mr. Bumble spoke, he raised his cane to the bill above him, and gave three distinct raps upon the words "five pounds:" which were printed thereon.

"Oh!" said the undertaker; "that's just the very thing I wanted to speak to you about."

"Hem!" said Mr. Bumble. "Well?"

"Well," replied the undertaker, "I was thinking that I'll take the boy myself."

Mr. Bumble grasped the undertaker by the arm, and led him into the building. Mr. Sowerberry was closeted with the board for five minutes; and it was arranged that Oliver should go to him that evening "upon liking,"—a phrase which means, in the case of a parish apprentice, that if the

master find, upon a short trial, that he can get enough work out of a boy without putting too much food into him, he shall have him for a term of years, to do what he likes with.

When little Oliver was taken before "the gentlemen" that evening, and informed that he was to go, that night, as general house-lad to a coffin-maker's; and that if he complained of his situation, or ever came back to the parish again, he would be sent to sea, there to be drowned, or knocked on the head, as the case might be, he evinced so little emotion, that they pronounced him a hardened young rascal, and ordered Mr. Bumble to remove him forthwith.

Oliver heard the news of his destination in perfect silence; and, having had his luggage put into his hand—which was not difficult to carry, as it was a brown paper parcel, about half a foot square by three inches deep—he pulled his cap over his eyes; and once more attaching himself to Mr. Bumble's coat cuff, was led away to a new scene of suffering.

For some time, Mr. Bumble drew Oliver along, without notice or remark. As they drew near to their destination, however, Mr. Bumble thought it expedient to look down, and see that the boy was in good order for inspection by his new master.

"Oliver!" said Mr. Bumble.

"Yes, sir," replied Oliver, in a low, tremulous voice.

"Pull that cap off your eyes, and hold up your head, sir."

Although Oliver did as he was desired at once, and passed the back of his unoccupied hand briskly across his eyes, he left a tear in them when he looked up at his conductor. As Mr. Bumble gazed sternly upon him, it rolled down his cheek. It was followed by another, and another.

The child made a strong effort, but it was an unsuccessful one. Withdrawing his other hand from Mr. Bumble's, he covered his face with both; and wept until the tears sprang out, from between his thin and bony fingers.

"Well!" exclaimed Mr. Bumble, stopping short, and darting at his little charge a look of intense malignity. "Well! Of *all* the ungrateful, and worst-disposed boys, Oliver, you are the——"

"No, no, sir," sobbed Oliver, clinging to the hand which held the well-known cane; "no, no, sir; I will be good indeed; indeed, indeed I will, sir! I am a very little boy, sir; and it is so—so——"

"So what?" inquired Mr. Bumble in amazement.

"So lonely, sir! So very lonely!" cried the child. "Everybody hates me. Oh! sir, don't, don't pray be cross to me!" The child beat his hand upon his heart; and looked in his companion's face, with tears of real agony.

Mr. Bumble regarded Oliver's piteous and helpless look, with some astonishment, for a few seconds; hemmed three or four times in a husky manner; and bade Oliver dry his eyes and be a good boy. Then, once more taking his hand, he walked on with him in silence.

IX. OLIVER'S NEW HOME.

THE undertaker, who had just put up the shutters of his shop, was making some entries in his day-book by the light of a most dismal candle, when Mr. Bumble entered.

"Aha!" said the undertaker; looking up from the book, and pausing in the middle of a word; "is that you, Bumble?"

"No one else, Mr. Sowerberry," replied the beadle. "Here! I've brought the boy." Oliver made a bow.

"Oh! that's the boy, is it?" said the undertaker, raising the candle above his head, to get a better view of Oliver. "Mrs. Sowerberry! will you have the goodness to come here a moment, my dear?"

Mrs. Sowerberry emerged from a little room behind the shop.

"My dear," said Mr. Sowerberry, "this is the boy from the workhouse that I told you of." Oliver bowed again.

"Dear me!" said the undertaker's wife, "he's very small."

"Why, he *is* rather small," replied Mr. Bumble, looking at Oliver as if it were his fault that he was no bigger; "he *is* small. There's no denying it. But he'll grow, Mrs. Sowerberry—he'll grow."

"Ah! I dare say he will," replied the lady pettishly, "on our victuals and our drink. I see no saving in parish children, not I; for they always cost more to keep than they're worth. However, men always think they know best. There! Get downstairs, little bag o' bones."

With this, the undertaker's wife opened a side-door, and pushed Oliver down a steep flight of stairs into a damp and dark kitchen, wherein sat a slatternly girl, in shoes down at heel, and blue worsted stockings very much out of repair.

"Here, Charlotte," said Mrs. Sowerberry, who had followed Oliver down, "give this boy some of the cold bits that were put by for Trip. He hasn't come home since the morning, so he may go without 'em. I daresay the boy isn't too dainty to eat 'em,—are you, boy?"

Oliver, whose eyes had glistened at the mention of meat, and who was trembling with eagerness to devour it, replied in the negative; and a plateful of coarse broken victuals was set before him.

"Well," said the undertaker's wife, when Oliver had

finished his supper, which she had regarded in silent horror; "have you done?"

There being nothing eatable within his reach, Oliver replied in the affirmative.

"Then come with me," said Mrs. Sowerberry, taking up a dim and dirty lamp, and leading the way upstairs; "your bed's under the counter. You don't mind sleeping among the coffins, I suppose? But it doesn't much matter whether you do or don't, for you can't sleep anywhere else. Come; don't keep me here all night!"

Oliver, being left to himself in the undertaker's shop, set the lamp down on a workman's bench, and gazed timidly about him with a feeling of awe and dread.

An unfinished coffin on black tressels, which stood in the middle of the shop, looked so gloomy and deathlike, that a cold tremble came over him, every time his eyes wandered in the direction of the dismal object. Coffin-plates, elm-chips, bright-headed nails, and shreds of black cloth lay scattered on the floor. The shop was close and hot; and the atmosphere seemed tainted with the smell of coffins. The recess beneath the counter in which his flock mattress was thrust, looked like a grave.

Nor were these the only dismal feelings which depressed Oliver. He was alone in a strange place; and we all know how chilled and desolate the best of us will sometimes feel in such a situation.

The boy had no friends to care for, or to care for him. The regret of no recent separation was fresh in his mind; the absence of no loved and well-remembered face sunk heavily into his heart. But his heart *was* heavy, notwithstanding.

X. MR. NOAH CLAYPOLE.

OLIVER was awakened in the morning by a loud kicking at the outside of the shop-door, which, before he could huddle on his clothes, was repeated, in an angry manner, about twenty-five times. When he began to undo the chain, the legs desisted and a voice began.

"Open the door, will yer?" cried the voice which belonged to the legs which had kicked at the door.

"I will directly, sir," replied Oliver, undoing the chain, and turning the key.

"I suppose yer the new boy, a'n't yer?" said the voice through the keyhole.

"Yes, sir," replied Oliver.

"How old are yer?" inquired the voice.

"Ten, sir," replied Oliver.

"Then I'll whop yer when I get in," said the voice; "you just see if I don't, that's all, my work'us brat!" and having made this obliging promise, the voice began to whistle.

Oliver drew back the bolts with a trembling hand, and opened the door. For a second or two, he glanced up the street, and down the street, and over the way; for nobody did he see but a big charity-boy, sitting on a post in front of the house, eating a slice of bread and butter.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Oliver, at length, seeing that no other visitor made his appearance; "did you knock?"

"I kicked," replied the charity-boy.

"Did you want a coffin, sir?" inquired Oliver, innocently.

At this, the charity-boy looked monstrous fierce; and

said that Oliver would want one before long, if he cut jokes with his superiors in that way.

"Yer don't know who I am, I suppose, Work'us?" said the charity-boy, in continuation, descending from the top of the post meanwhile.

"No, sir," rejoined Oliver.

"I'm Mister Noah Claypole," said the charity-boy, "and you're under me. Take down the shutters, yer idle young ruffian!" With this, Mr. Claypole administered a kick to Oliver, and entered the shop with a dignified air.

Oliver, having taken down the shutters, and broken a pane of glass in his efforts to stagger away beneath the weight of the first one, was graciously assisted by Noah; who, having consoled him with the assurance that "he'd catch it," condescended to help him.

Mr. Sowerberry came down soon after. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Sowerberry appeared; and Oliver having "caught it," in fulfilment of Noah's prediction, followed that young gentleman downstairs to breakfast.

"Come near the fire, Noah," said Charlotte. "I saved a nice little bit of bacon for you from master's breakfast. Oliver, shut that door at Mr. Noah's back, and take the bits that I've put out on the cover of the bread-pan. There's your tea; take it away to that box, and drink it there, and make haste, for they'll want you to mind the shop. D'ye hear?"

"D'ye hear, Work'us?" said Noah Claypole. They both looked scornfully at poor Oliver Twist, as he sat shivering on the box in the coldest corner of the room, and ate the stale pieces which had been reserved for him.

XI. OLIVER RATHER ASTONISHES NOAH.

THE month's trial over, Oliver was apprenticed. It was a sickly season just at this time, and, in the course of a few weeks, Oliver had acquired a great deal of experience. The oldest inhabitants recollected no period at which measles had been so fatal; and many were the mournful processions which little Oliver headed, in a hat-band reaching down to his knees, to the admiration and emotion of all the mothers in the town.

For many months he continued meekly to submit to the ill-treatment of Noah Claypole; who used him far worse than before, now that his jealousy was roused.

Charlotte treated him badly, because Noah did; and Mrs. Sowerberry was his decided enemy, because Mr. Sowerberry was disposed to be his friend; so, between these three on one side, and a glut of funerals on the other, Oliver was not altogether comfortable.

And now, I come to a very important passage in Oliver's history, for I have to record an act which indirectly produced a change in all his future prospects and proceedings.

One day, Oliver and Noah had descended into the kitchen at the usual dinner-hour, to banquet upon a small joint of mutton—a pound and a half of the worst end of the neck—when there ensued a brief interval of time, which Noah Claypole considered he could not devote to a worthier purpose than aggravating young Oliver Twist.

Intent upon this amusement, Noah put his feet on the table-cloth; then pulled Oliver's hair; and twitched his ears; and expressed his opinion that he was a "sneak;" and entered upon various other topics of petty annoyance, like a malicious and ill-conditioned boy as he was.

"Work'us," said Noah, "how's your mother?"

"She's dead," replied Oliver; "don't you say anything about her to me!"

"What did she die of, Work'us?" said Noah.

"Of a broken heart, some of the old nurses told me," replied Oliver: more as if he were talking to himself than answering Noah. "I think I know what it must be to die of that!"

"Tol de rol lol lol, right fol lairy, Work'us," said Noah, as a tear rolled down Oliver's cheek. "What's set you a snivelling now?"

"Not *you*," replied Oliver, hastily brushing the tear away. "Don't think it."

"Oh, not me, eh?" sneered Noah.

"No, not you," replied Oliver, sharply. "There; that's enough. Don't say anything more to me about her; you'd better not!"

"Better not!" exclaimed Noah. "Well! Better not! Work'us, don't be impudent, *Your* mother, too! She was a nice 'un, she was. Yer know, Work'us," continued Noah, emboldened by Oliver's silence, and speaking in a jeering tone: "I'm very sorry for it; but yer mother was a regular right-down bad 'un."

"What did you say?" inquired Oliver, looking up very quickly.

"A regular right-down bad 'un, Work'us," replied Noah, coolly. "And it's a great deal better, Work'us, that she died when she did."

Crimson with fury, Oliver started up; overthrew the chair and table; seized Noah by the throat; shook him, in the violence of his rage, till his teeth chattered in his head; and, collecting his whole force into one heavy blow, felled him to the ground.

A minute ago, the boy had looked the quiet, mild, de-

jected creature that harsh treatment had made him. But his spirit was roused at last; the cruel insult to his dead



OLIVER PLUCKS UP A SPIRIT.

mother had set his blood on fire. His breast heaved; his attitude was erect; his eye bright and vivid; his whole

person changed, as he stood glaring over the cowardly tormenter who now lay crouching at his feet.

"He'll murder me!" blubbered Noah. "Charlotte! missis! Here's the new boy a murdering of me! Help! Help! Oliver's gone mad! Char—lotte!"

Noah's shouts were responded to by a loud scream from Charlotte, and a louder from Mrs. Sowerberry; the former of whom rushed into the kitchen by a side door, while the latter paused on the staircase.

"Oh, you little wretch!" screamed Charlotte; seizing Oliver with her utmost force. "Oh, you little un-grate-ful, mur-de-rous, hor-rid, villain!" And between every syllable, Charlotte gave Oliver a blow with all her might; accompanying it with a scream.

Charlotte's fist was by no means a light one; but, lest it should not calm Oliver's wrath, Mrs. Sowerberry plunged into the kitchen, and assisted to hold him with one hand, while she scratched his face with the other. In this position of affairs, Noah rose from the ground, and pommelled him behind.

This was rather too violent exercise to last long. When they were all three wearied out, and could tear and beat no longer, they dragged Oliver, struggling and shouting, but nothing daunted, into the dust-cellar, and there locked him up.

"What's to be done?" exclaimed Mrs. Sowerberry. "Your master's not at home; there's not a man in the house; he'll kick that door down in ten minutes." Oliver's vigorous plunges against the bit of timber in question, rendering this occurrence highly probable.

"Dear, dear! I don't know, ma'am," said Charlotte, "unless we send for the police-officers."

"No, no," said Mrs. Sowerberry, bethinking herself of Oliver's old friend. "Run to Mr. Bumble, Noah, and tell

him to come here directly, and not to lose a minute ; never mind your cap! Make haste! You can hold a knife to that black eye, as you run along. It'll keep the swelling down."

Noah stopped to make no reply, but started off at his fullest speed; and very much it astonished the people who were out walking, to see a charity-boy tearing through the streets pell-mell, with no cap on his head, and a clasp-knife at his eye.

XII. MR. BUMBLE IS FETCHED.

NOAH CLAYPOLE ran along the streets at his swiftest pace, and paused not once for breath, until he reached the workhouse gate. Having rested here for a minute or so, to collect a good burst of sobs and an imposing show of tears and terror, he knocked loudly at the wicket.

"Mr. Bumble! Mr. Bumble!" cried Noah, with well-affected dismay, and in tones so loud and agitated, that they caught the ear of Mr. Bumble himself, who happened to be hard by.

"Oh, Mr. Bumble, sir!" said Noah: "Oliver, sir,—Oliver has——"

"What? What?" interposed Mr. Bumble: with a gleam of pleasure in his eyes. "Not run away; he hasn't run away, has he, Noah?"

"No, sir, no. Not run away, sir, but he's turned vicious," replied Noah. "He tried to murder me, sir; and then he tried to murder Charlotte; and then missis. Oh! what dreadful pain it is! Such agony, please, sir!" And here Noah writhed and twisted his body into a variety of eel-like positions; thereby giving Mr. Bumble to understand that, from the violent onset of Oliver Twist, he was, at that moment, suffering the acutest torture.

When Noah observed a gentleman in a white waistcoat crossing the yard, he was more tragic in his lamentations than ever.

The gentleman's notice was very soon attracted; for he had not walked three paces, when he turned angrily round, and inquired what that young cur was howling for.

"It's a poor boy from the free school, sir," replied Mr. Bumble, "who has been nearly murdered—all but murdered, sir,—by young Twist."

"By Jove!" exclaimed the gentleman in the white waistcoat, stopping short. "I knew it! I felt from the very first, that that audacious young savage would come to be hung!"

"He has likewise attempted, sir, to murder the female servant," said Mr. Bumble, with a face of ashy paleness.

"And his missis," interposed Mr. Claypole.

"And his master, too, I think you said, Noah?" added Mr. Bumble.

"No; he's out, or he would have murdered him," replied Noah. "He said he wanted to."

"Ah! said he wanted to; did he, my boy?" inquired the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

"Yes, sir," replied Noah. "And please, sir, missis wants to know whether Mr. Bumble can spare time to step up there, directly, and flog him—'cause master's out."

"Certainly, my boy; certainly," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat, smiling benignly. "Bumble, just step up to Sowerberry's with your cane, and see what's best to be done. Don't spare him, Bumble."

"No, I will not, sir," replied the beadle.

"Tell Sowerberry not to spare him either. They'll never do anything with him without stripes and bruises," said the gentleman in the white waistcoat.

"I'll take care, sir," replied the beadle. And the cocked

hat and cane having been adjusted to their owner's satisfaction, Mr. Bumble and Noah Claypole betook themselves with all speed to the undertaker's shop.

XIII. OLIVER IN THE CELLAR.

HERE, the position of affairs had not at all improved. Sowerberry had not yet returned, and Oliver continued to kick, with undiminished vigour, at the cellar-door. Mr. Bumble gave a kick at the outside; and then, applying his mouth to the keyhole, said, in a deep and impressive tone:

"Oliver!"

"Come; you let me out!" replied Oliver, from the inside.

"Do you know this voice, Oliver?" said Mr. Bumble.

"Yes," replied Oliver.

"Ain't you afraid of it, sir? Ain't you a trembling while I speak, sir?" said Mr. Bumble.

"No!" replied Oliver boldly.

An answer so different from the one he had expected, and was in the habit of receiving, staggered Mr. Bumble not a little. He stepped back from the keyhole; drew himself up to his full height; and looked from one to another of the three bystanders, in mute astonishment.

"Oh, you know, Mr. Bumble, he must be mad," said Mrs. Sowerberry. "No boy in half his senses could venture to speak so to you."

"It's not Madness, ma'am," replied Mr. Bumble, after a few moments of deep meditation. "It's Meat."

"What?" exclaimed Mrs. Sowerberry.

"Meat, ma'am, meat," replied Bumble, with stern emphasis. "You've overfed him, ma'am. You've raised a soul and spirit in him, ma'am, unbecoming a person of his

condition. What have paupers to do with soul or spirit? It's quite enough that we let 'em have live bodies. If you had kept the boy on gruel, ma'am, this would never have happened."

"Dear, dear!" ejaculated Mrs. Sowerberry, raising her eyes to the kitchen ceiling; "this comes of being liberal!"

The liberality of Mrs. Sowerberry to Oliver had consisted in a bestowal upon him of all the dirty odds and ends which nobody else would eat.

"Ah!" said Mr. Bumble, when the lady brought her eyes down to earth again; "the only thing that can be done now, that I know of, is to leave him in the cellar for a day or so, till he's a little starved down; and then to take him out, and keep him on gruel all through his apprenticeship. He comes of a bad family."

Sowerberry returned at this juncture. Oliver's offence having been explained to him, with such exaggerations as the ladies thought best calculated to rouse his ire, he unlocked the cellar-door in a twinkling, and dragged his rebellious apprentice out, by the collar.

XIV. OLIVER IS FLOGGED.

OLIVER'S clothes had been torn in the beating he had received; his face was bruised and scratched; and his hair scattered over his forehead. The angry flush had not disappeared, however; and when he was pulled out of his prison, he scowled boldly on Noah, and looked quite undismayed.

"Now, you're a nice young fellow, ain't you?" said Sowerberry; giving Oliver a shake, and a box on the ear.

"He called my mother names," replied Oliver.

"Well, and what if he did, you little ungrateful wretch?"

said Mrs. Sowerberry. "She deserved what he said, and worse."

"She didn't," said Oliver.

"She did," said Mrs. Sowerberry.

"It's a lie!" said Oliver.

Mrs. Sowerberry burst into a flood of tears.

This flood of tears left Mr. Sowerberry no alternative; so he at once gave him a drubbing, which satisfied even Mrs. Sowerberry herself; and rendered Mr. Bumble's cane rather unnecessary.

For the rest of the day, he was shut up in the back kitchen, in company with a pump and a slice of bread; and at night, Mrs. Sowerberry, after making various remarks, outside the door, by no means complimentary to the memory of his mother, looked into the room, and, amidst the jeers and pointings of Noah and Charlotte, ordered him upstairs to his dismal bed.

It was not until he was left alone, in the silence and stillness of the gloomy workshop of the undertaker, that Oliver gave way to the feelings which the day's treatment may be supposed likely to have awakened in a mere child.

He had listened to their taunts with a look of contempt; he had borne the lash without a cry: for he felt that pride swelling in his heart, which would have kept down a shriek to the last, though they had roasted him alive. But now, when there were none to see or hear him, he fell upon his knees on the floor; and, hiding his face in his hands, wept such tears as, God send for the credit of our nature, few so young may ever have cause to pour out before Him!

For a long time, Oliver remained motionless in this attitude. The candle was burning low in the socket when he rose to his feet. Having gazed cautiously round him, and listened intently, he gently undid the fastenings of the door, and looked abroad.

It was a cold, dark night. The stars seemed, to the boy's eyes, farther from the earth than he had ever seen them before; there was no wind; and the shadows thrown by the trees upon the ground looked deathlike, from being so still. He softly reclosed the door, and sat himself down upon a bench to wait for morning.

XV. GOOD-BYE TO DICK.

WITH the first ray of light that struggled through the crevices in the shutters, Oliver arose, and again unbarred the door. One timid look around—one moment's pause of hesitation—he had closed it behind him, and was in the open street.

He looked to the right and to the left, uncertain whither to fly. He remembered to have seen the waggons, as they went out, toiling up the hill. He took the same route; and, arriving at a footpath across the fields—which he knew, after some distance, led out again into the road—struck into it, and walked quickly on.

Along this same footpath, Oliver well remembered he had trotted beside Mr. Bumble, when he first carried him to the workhouse from the farm. His way lay directly in front of the cottage. His heart beat quickly when he bethought himself of this, and he half resolved to turn back. He had come a long way, though, and should lose a great deal of time by doing so. Besides, it was so early that there was very little fear of his being seen; so he walked on.

He reached the house. There was no appearance of its inmates stirring at that early hour. Oliver stopped, and peeped into the garden. A child was weeding one of the

little beds ; as he stopped he raised his pale face and disclosed the features of one of his former companions. Oliver felt glad to see him, before he went ; for, though younger than himself, he had been his little friend and playmate. They had been beaten, and starved, and shut up together, many and many a time.

"Hush, Dick !" said Oliver, as the boy ran to the gate and thrust his thin arm between the rails to greet him. "Is anyone up ?"

"Nobody but me," replied the child.

"You mustn't say you saw me, Dick," said Oliver. "I am running away. They beat and ill-use me, Dick ; and I am going to seek my fortune, some long way off. I don't know where. How pale you are !"

"I heard the doctor tell them I was dying," replied the child with a faint smile. "I am very glad to see you, dear ; but don't stop, don't stop !"

"Yes, yes, I will, to say good-bye to you," replied Oliver. "I shall see you again, Dick. I know I shall ! You will be well and happy !"

"I hope so," replied the child. "After I am dead, but not before. I know the doctor must be right, Oliver, because I dream so much of heaven, and angels, and kind faces that I never see when I am awake. Kiss me," said the child, climbing up the low gate and flinging his little arms round Oliver's neck. "Good-bye, dear !—God bless you !"

The blessing was from a young child's lips, but it was the first that Oliver had ever heard invoked upon his head ; and through the struggles and sufferings, and troubles and changes, of his after life, he never once forgot it.

XVI. OLIVER WALKS TO LONDON.

OLIVER reached the stile at which the by-path terminated ; and once more gained the high-road. It was eight o'clock now. Though he was nearly five miles away from the town, he ran and hid behind the hedges, by turns, till noon : fearing that he might be pursued and overtaken. Then he sat down to rest by the side of a milestone, and began to think, for the first time, where he had better go and try to live.

The stone by which he was seated, bore an intimation that it was just seventy miles from that spot to London. London !—that great large place !—nobody—not even Mr. Bumble—could ever find him there ! He had often heard the old men in the workhouse, too, say that no lad of spirit need want in London ; and that there were ways of living in that vast city, which those who had been bred up in country parts had no idea of. It was the very place for a homeless boy, who must die in the streets unless some one helped him. As these things passed through his thoughts, he jumped upon his feet, and trudged on.

Oliver walked twenty miles that day ; and all that time tasted nothing but the crust of dry bread, and a few draughts of water, which he begged at the cottage doors by the roadside. When the night came he turned into a meadow ; and creeping close under a hayrick, determined to lie there till morning. He felt frightened at first ; for the wind moaned dismally over the empty fields ; and he was cold and hungry, and more alone than he had ever felt before. Being very tired with his walk, however, he soon fell asleep and forgot his troubles.

He felt cold and stiff, when he got up next morning.

He had walked no more than twelve miles, when night closed in again. His feet were sore, and his legs so weak that they trembled beneath him. Another night passed in the bleak, damp air, made him worse; when he set forward on his journey next morning, he could hardly crawl along.

In some villages, large painted boards were fixed up, warning all persons who begged within the district, that they would be sent to jail. This frightened Oliver very much, and made him glad to get out of those villages.

In fact, if it had not been for a good-hearted turnpike-man, and a benevolent old lady, Oliver would most assuredly have fallen dead upon the king's highway. But the turnpike-man gave him a meal of bread and cheese; and the old lady, who had a shipwrecked grandson wandering barefooted in some distant part of the earth, took pity upon the poor orphan, and gave him what little she could afford—and more—with such kind and gentle words, that they sank deeper into Oliver's soul than all the sufferings he had ever undergone.

Early on the seventh morning after he had left his native place, Oliver limped slowly into the little town of Barnet. The sun was rising in all his splendid beauty, but the light only served to show the boy his own lonesomeness, as he sat, with bleeding feet and covered with dust, upon a cold door-step.

By degrees the shutters were opened, the window-blinds were drawn up, and people began passing to and fro. Some few stopped to gaze at Oliver for a moment or two, or turned round to stare at him as they hurried by; but none relieved him, or troubled themselves to inquire how he came there. He had no heart to beg—and there he sat.

XVII. THE ARTFUL DODGER.

HE had been crouching on the step for some time, when he was aroused by observing that a boy, who had passed him carelessly some minutes before, had returned, and was now surveying him most earnestly from the opposite side of the way. The boy crossed over; and, walking close up to Oliver, said :

“Hullo, my covey, what’s the row?”

The boy was about his own age, but one of the queerest-looking boys that Oliver had ever seen. He was a common-faced boy enough, and as dirty as one would wish to see; but he had about him all the airs and manners of a man. He was short of his age, with rather bow-legs, and little, sharp, ugly eyes. He wore a man’s coat, which reached nearly to his heels. He had turned the cuffs back, half-way up his arm, to get his hands out of the sleeves, apparently with the view of thrusting them into the pockets of his corduroy trousers; for there he kept them.

“Hullo, my covey, what’s the row?” said this strange young gentleman to Oliver.

“I am very hungry and tired,” replied Oliver: the tears standing in his eyes as he spoke. “I have walked a long way. I have been walking these seven days.”

Assisting Oliver to rise, the young gentleman took him to a shop, where he purchased a half-quartern loaf, or, as he himself expressed it, “a fourpenny bran.” Taking the bread under his arm, the young gentleman turned into a small public-house, and led the way to a tap-room in the rear of the premises. Here Oliver, at his new friend’s bidding, made a hearty meal, during the progress of which

the strange boy eyed him from time to time with great attention.

"Going to London?" said the strange boy, when Oliver had at length concluded.

"Yes."

"Got any lodgings?"

"No."

"Money?"

"No."

The strange boy whistled; and put his arms into his pockets, as far as the big coat-sleeves would let them go.

"Do you live in London?" inquired Oliver.

"Yes. I do, when I'm at home," replied the boy. "I suppose you want some place to sleep in to-night, don't you?"

"I do indeed," answered Oliver. "I have not slept under a roof since I left the country."

"Don't fret your eyelids on that score," said the young gentleman. "I've got to be in London to-night; and I know a 'spectable old genelman as lives there, wot'll give you lodgings for nothink, and never ask for the change—that is, if any genelman he knows interduces you. And don't he know me? Oh, no! Not in the least! By no means. Certainly not!"

This unexpected offer of shelter was too tempting to be resisted: especially as it was followed up by the assurance that the old gentleman already referred to, would doubtless provide Oliver with a comfortable place, without loss of time. This led to a more friendly dialogue; from which Oliver discovered that his friend's name was Jack Dawkins, and that among his intimate friends he was better known as "The Artful Dodger."

As John Dawkins objected to their entering London before nightfall, it was nearly eleven o'clock when they

reached the turnpike at Islington. The Dodger scudded along at a rapid pace, directing Oliver to follow close at his heels.

Although Oliver had enough to occupy his attention in keeping sight of his leader, he could not help bestowing a few hasty glances on either side of the way, as he passed along. A dirtier or more wretched place he had never seen. The street was very narrow and muddy. There were a good many small shops; but the only stock-in-trade appeared to be heaps of children, who, even at that time of night, were crawling in and out the doors, or screaming from the inside. The sole places that seemed to prosper, amid the general blight of the place, were the public-houses.

XVIII. THE OLD JEW'S HOUSE.

OLIVER was just considering whether he hadn't better run away, when they reached the bottom of the hill. His conductor, catching him by the arm, pushed open the door of a house near Field Lane; and, drawing him into the passage, closed it behind them.

Oliver, groping his way with one hand, and having the other firmly grasped by his companion, ascended with much difficulty the dark and broken stairs: which his conductor mounted with an ease that showed he was well acquainted with them. He threw open the door of a back-room, and drew Oliver in after him.

The walls and ceiling of the room were perfectly black with age and dirt. There was a deal table before the fire: upon which were a candle, stuck in a ginger-beer bottle: two or three pewter pots: a loaf and butter: and a plate.

In a frying-pan, which was on the fire, and which was secured to the mantelshelf by a string, some sausages were cooking; and standing over them, with a toasting-fork in his hand, was a very old shrivelled Jew, whose villainous-looking and repulsive face was obscured by a quantity of matted red hair. He was dressed in a greasy flannel gown, with his throat bare; and seemed to be dividing his attention between the frying-pan and a clothes-horse, over which a great number of silk handkerchiefs were hanging. Several rough beds, made of old sacks, were huddled side by side on the floor. Seated round the table were four or five boys, none older than the Dodger, smoking long clay pipes, and drinking spirits with the air of middle-aged men. They all crowded about their associate as he whispered a few words to the Jew; and then turned round and grinned at Oliver. So did the Jew himself: toasting-fork in hand.

"This is him, Fagin," said Jack Dawkins; "my friend Oliver Twist."

The Jew grinned; and, making a low obeisance to Oliver, took him by the hand, and hoped he should have the honour of his intimate acquaintance.

"We are very glad to see you, Oliver—very," said the Jew. "Dodger, take off the sausages; and draw a tub near the fire for Oliver. Ah, you're a-staring at the pocket-handkerchiefs! eh, my dear! There's a good many of 'em, ain't there? We've just looked 'em out, ready for the wash; that's all, Oliver; that's all. Ha! ha! ha!"

The latter part of this speech was hailed by a boisterous shout from all the hopeful pupils of the merry old gentleman. In the midst of which, they went to supper.

Oliver ate his share, and the Jew then mixed him a glass of hot gin and water: telling him he must drink it off directly, because another gentleman wanted the tumbler.

Oliver did as he was desired. Immediately afterwards, he felt himself gently lifted on to one of the sacks; and then he sunk into a deep sleep.

XIX. THE PLEASANT OLD GENTLEMAN, AND HIS HOPEFUL PUPILS.

It was late next morning when Oliver awoke from a sound, long sleep. There was no other person in the room but the old Jew, who was boiling some coffee in a saucepan for breakfast.

Oliver asked if he might get up.

"Certainly, my dear, certainly," replied the old gentleman.

Oliver got up, and had scarcely washed himself, when the Dodger returned, accompanied by a very sprightly young fellow, who was introduced as Charley Bates. The four sat down to breakfast on the coffee and some hot rolls and ham, which the Dodger had brought home in the crown of his hat.

"Well," said the Jew, glancing slyly at Oliver, and addressing himself to the Dodger, "I hope you've been at work this morning, my dears?"

"Hard," replied the Dodger.

"As nails," added Charley Bates.

"Good boys, good boys!" said the Jew. "What have *you* got, Dodger?"

"A couple of pocket-books," replied that young gentleman.

"Lined?" inquired the Jew, with eagerness.

"Pretty well," replied the Dodger, producing two pocket-books, one green and the other red.

"Not so heavy as they might be," said the Jew, after looking at the insides carefully; "but very neat and nicely made. And what have you got, my dear?" said Fagin to Charley Bates.

"Wipes," replied Master Bates, at the same time producing four pocket-handkerchiefs.

"Well," said the Jew, inspecting them closely, "they're very good ones—very. You haven't marked them well, though, Charley; so the marks shall be picked out with a needle, and we'll teach Oliver how to do it."

"If you please, sir," said Oliver.

"You'd like to be able to make pocket handkerchiefs as easy as Charley Bates, wouldn't you, my dear?" said the Jew.

"Very much indeed, if you'll teach me, sir," replied Oliver.

The Dodger said nothing, but he smoothed Oliver's hair over his eyes, and said he'd know by-and-by. Directly afterwards, the Dodger and Charley went away together, having been kindly furnished by the old Jew with money to spend.

"There, my dear," said Fagin. "That's a pleasant life, isn't it? They have gone out for the day."

"Have they done work, sir?" inquired Oliver.

"Yes," said the Jew; "that is, unless they should unexpectedly come across any when they are out; and they won't neglect it, if they do, my dear: depend upon it. Make 'em your models, my dear," said the Jew, tapping the fire-shovel on the hearth to add force to his words: "do everything they bid you, and take their advice in all matters—especially the Dodger's, my dear. Is my handkerchief hanging out of my pocket, my dear?" said the Jew, stopping short.

"Yes, sir," said Oliver.

"See if you can take it out, without my feeling it: as you saw them do, when we were at play this morning."

Oliver held up the bottom of the pocket with one hand, as he had seen the Dodger hold it, and drew the handkerchief lightly out of it with the other.

"Is it gone?" cried the Jew.

"Here it is, sir," said Oliver, showing it in his hand.

"You're a clever boy, my dear," said the playful old gentleman, patting Oliver on the head. "I never saw a sharper lad. Here's a shilling for you. If you go on in this way, you'll be the greatest man of the time. And now come here, and I'll show you how to take the marks out of the handkerchiefs."

XX. OUT FOR A WALK.

For many days Oliver remained in the Jew's room picking the marks out of the pocket-handkerchiefs (of which a great number were brought home). At length he began to languish for fresh air, and took many occasions of earnestly entreating the old gentleman to allow him to go out to work with his two companions.

One morning Oliver obtained the permission he had so eagerly sought. The old gentleman placed him under the joint guardianship of Charley Bates and his friend the Dodger.

The three boys sallied out; the Dodger with his coat-sleeves tucked up, and his hat cocked, as usual; Master Bates sauntering along with his hands in his pockets; and Oliver between them, wondering where they were going, and what he would be instructed in first.

The pace at which they went was such a very lazy, ill-

looking saunter, that Oliver soon began to think his companions were going to deceive the old gentleman, by not going to work at all.

They were just emerging from a narrow court, when the Dodger made a sudden stop; and, laying his finger on his lip, drew his companions back again with the greatest caution.

"What's the matter?" demanded Oliver.

"Hush!" replied the Dodger. "Do you see that old cove at the bookstall?"

"The old gentleman over the way?" said Oliver. "Yes, I see him."

"He'll do," said the Dodger.

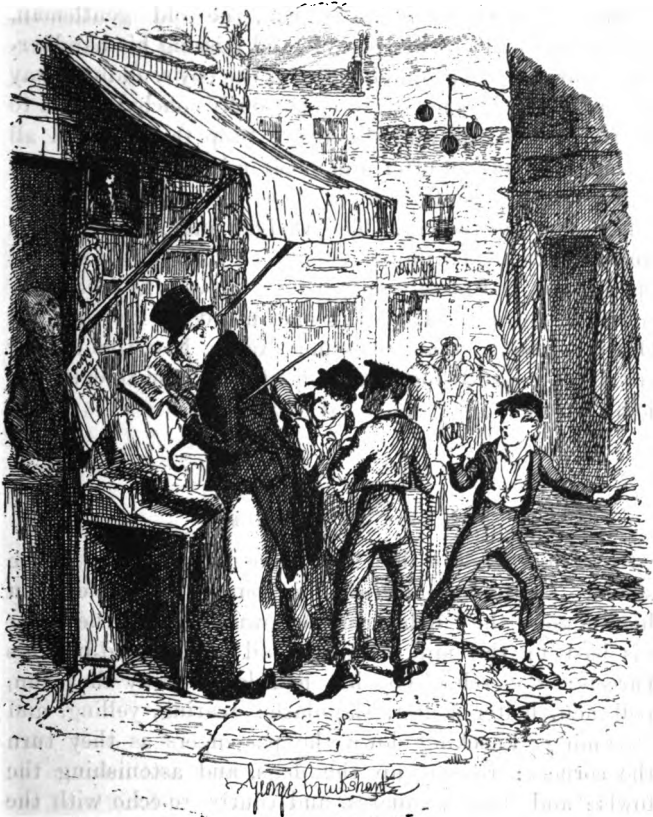
Oliver looked from one to the other with the greatest surprise; but he was not permitted to make any inquiries, for the two boys walked stealthily across the road, and slunk close behind the old gentleman towards whom his attention had been directed. Oliver walked a few paces after them; and, not knowing whether to advance or retire, stood looking on in silent amazement.

The old gentleman had taken up a book from the stall; and there he stood, reading away, as hard as if he were in his elbow-chair, in his own study. It is very possible that he fancied himself there, indeed; for it was plain that he saw not the bookstall, nor the street, nor the boys, nor, in short, anything but the book itself, which he was reading with the greatest interest and eagerness.

What was Oliver's horror and alarm, as he stood a few paces off, to see the Dodger plunge his hand into the old gentleman's pocket, and draw from thence a handkerchief! To see him hand the same to Charley Bates; and finally to behold them both running away round the corner at full speed!

In an instant the whole mystery of the handkerchiefs,

and the Jew, rushed upon the boy's mind. He stood, for a moment, with the blood so tingling through all his veins



THE OLD GENTLEMAN AT THE BOOKSTALL

from terror, that he felt as if he were in a burning fire ; then, confused and frightened, he took to his heels ; and,

not knowing what he did, made off as fast as he could lay his feet to the ground.

This was all done in a minute's space. In the very instant when Oliver began to run, the old gentleman, putting his hand to his pocket, and missing his handkerchief, turned sharp round. Seeing the boy scudding away at such a rapid pace, he very naturally concluded him to be the depredator, and shouting "Stop thief!" with all his might, made off after him, book in hand.

But the old gentleman was not the only person who raised the hue-and-cry. The Dodger and Master Bates, unwilling to attract public attention by running down the open street, had merely retired into the very first doorway round the corner. They no sooner heard the cry, and saw Oliver running, than, guessing exactly how the matter stood, they issued forth, and shouting "Stop thief!" too, joined in the pursuit like good citizens.

XXI. "STOP THIEF!"

"Stop thief! Stop thief!" There is a magic in the sound. The tradesman leaves his counter, and the carman his waggon; the butcher throws down his tray; the baker his basket; the milk-man his pail; the errand-boy his parcels; the school-boy his marbles. Away they run, pell-mell, helter-skelter, slap-dash: tearing, yelling, and screaming; knocking down the passengers as they turn the corners: rousing up the dogs, and astonishing the fowls: and streets, squares, and courts, re-echo with the sound.

Stopped at last! A clever blow! He is down upon the pavement; and the crowd eagerly gather round him: each new comer jostling and struggling with the others to

catch a glimpse. “Stand aside!” “Give him a little air!” “Nonsense! he don’t deserve it.” “Where’s the gentleman?” “Here he is, coming down the street.” “Make room there for the gentleman!” “Is this the boy, sir?” “Yes.”

Oliver lay, covered with mud and dust, and bleeding from the mouth, looking wildly round upon the heap of faces that surrounded him, when the old gentleman was pushed into the circle by the foremost of the pursuers.

“Yes,” said the gentleman, “I am afraid it is the boy.”

“Afraid!” murmured the crowd. “That’s a good ’un.”

“Poor fellow!” said the gentleman, “he has hurt himself.”

“I did that, sir,” said a great lubberly fellow, stepping forward. “I stopped him, sir.”

The fellow touched his hat with a grin, expecting something for his pains; but the old gentleman, eyeing him with an expression of dislike, looked anxiously round, as if he contemplated running away himself: which it is very possible he might have attempted to do, and thus afforded another chase, had not a police-officer at that moment made his way through the crowd, and seized Oliver by the collar.

“Come, get up,” said the man, roughly.

“It wasn’t me, indeed, sir. Indeed, indeed, it was two other boys,” said Oliver, clasping his hands passionately, and looking round. “They are here somewhere.”

“Oh no, they ain’t,” said the officer. This was true; for the Dodger and Charley Bates had filed off down the first convenient court they came to. “Come, get up!”

“Don’t hurt him,” said the old gentleman, compassionately.

“Oh no, I won’t hurt him,” replied the officer, tearing his jacket half off his back, in proof thereof. “Come, I

know you; it won't do. Will you stand upon your legs?"

Oliver, who could hardly stand, made a shift to raise himself on his feet, and was at once lugged along the streets by the jacket-collar, at a rapid pace. The gentleman walked on with them by the officer's side; and many of the crowd got a little ahead, and stared back at Oliver from time to time. The boys shouted in triumph; and on they went.

[Oliver was taken before a magistrate, although against the wish of the kindly old gentleman whose handkerchief had been stolen. Mr. Brownlow was that gentleman's name. The bookstall keeper had seen the theft committed, and, fortunately for Oliver, he ran to the magistrate's office to give evidence that the boy was innocent. So Oliver was set free. But he was so overcome by all that had happened, that he fainted, and fell to the ground.]

XXII. A GOOD FRIEND FOR OLIVER.

LITTLE Oliver Twist lay on his back on the pavement, with his shirt unbuttoned, and his temples bathed with water; his face a deadly white; and a cold tremble convulsing his whole frame.

"Poor boy, poor boy!" said Mr. Brownlow, bending over him. "Call a coach, somebody, pray, directly!"

A coach was obtained, and Oliver, having been carefully laid on one seat, the old gentleman got in and sat himself on the other.

"May I accompany you?" said the bookstall keeper, looking in.

"Bless me, yes, my dear sir," said Mr. Brownlow quickly.

"I forgot you. Dear, dear! Jump in. Poor fellow! there's no time to lose."

The bookstall keeper got into the coach; and away they drove. The coach rattled away over nearly the same ground as that which Oliver had traversed when he first entered London in company with the Dodger; and stopped at length before a neat house, in a quiet shady street near Pentonville. Here a bed was prepared, without loss of time, and here he was tended with a kindness that knew no bounds.

But, for many days, Oliver remained insensible to all the goodness of his new friends. The sun rose and sunk, and rose and sunk again, and many times after that; and still the boy lay stretched on his uneasy bed, dwindling away beneath the dry and wasting heat of fever.

Weak, and thin, and pallid, he awoke at last from what seemed to have been a long and troubled dream. Feebly raising himself in the bed, with his head resting on his trembling arm, he looked anxiously around.

"What room is this? Where have I been brought to?" said Oliver. "This is not the place I went to sleep in."

He uttered these words in a feeble voice, being very faint and weak: but they were overheard at once; for the curtain at the bed's head was hastily drawn back, and a motherly old lady rose, as she undrew it, from an arm-chair close by, in which she had been sitting at needle-work.

"Hush, my dear," said the old lady softly. "You must be very quiet, or you will be ill again; and you have been very bad,—as bad as bad could be, pretty nigh. Lie down again; there's a dear!" With these words, the old lady very gently placed Oliver's head upon the pillow; and, smoothing back his hair from his forehead, looked so kindly and lovingly in his face, that he could not help

placing his little withered hand in hers, and drawing it round his neck.

"Save us!" said the old lady, with tears in her eyes, "what a grateful little dear it is! Pretty creetur! what would his mother feel if she had sat by him as I have, and could see him now!"

"Perhaps she does see me," whispered Oliver, folding his hands together: "perhaps she has sat by me. I almost feel as if she had."

"That was the fever, my dear," said the old lady mildly.

"I suppose it was," replied Oliver, "because Heaven is a long way off; and they are too happy there to come down to the bedside of a poor boy. But if she knew I was ill, she must have pitied me, even there; for she was very ill herself before she died. She can't know anything about me though," added Oliver after a moment's silence. "If she had seen me hurt, it would have made her sorrowful; and her face has always looked sweet and happy, when I have dreamed of her."

The old lady made no reply to this; but wiping her eyes, and her spectacles, brought some cool stuff for Oliver to drink; and then patting him on the cheek, told him he must lie very quiet, or he would be ill again.

XXIII. OLIVER GETS BETTER.

So Oliver kept very still, partly because he was anxious to obey the kind old lady in all things, and partly, to tell the truth, because he was completely exhausted with what he had already said. He soon fell into a gentle doze, from which he was awakened by the light of a candle, which,

being brought near the bed, showed him a gentleman, with a very large and loud-ticking gold watch in his hand, who felt his pulse, and said he was a great deal better.

"You *are* a great deal better, are you not, my dear?" said the gentleman.

"Yes, thank you, sir," replied Oliver.

"Yes, I know you are," said the gentleman. "You're hungry too, ain't you?"

"No, sir," replied Oliver.

"Hem!" said the gentleman. "No, I know you're not. He is not hungry, Mrs. Bedwin," said the gentleman, looking very wise.

"You feel sleepy, don't you, my dear?" said the doctor.

"No, sir," replied Oliver.

"No," said the doctor, with a very shrewd and satisfied look. "You're not sleepy; nor thirsty, are you?"

"Yes, sir; rather thirsty," answered Oliver.

"Just as I expected, Mrs. Bedwin," said the doctor. "It's very natural that he should be thirsty. You may give him a little tea, ma'am, and some dry toast without any butter. Don't keep him too warm, ma'am; but be careful that you don't let him be too cold—will you have the goodness?"

The old lady dropped a curtsey. The doctor, after tasting the cool stuff, and expressing approval thereof, hurried away, his boots creaking in a very important and wealthy manner as he went downstairs.

Oliver dozed off again soon after this; when he awoke, it was nearly twelve o'clock. The old lady tenderly bade him good-night shortly afterwards, and left him in charge of a fat old woman who had just come, bringing with her, in a little bundle, a small prayer-book and a large night-cap. Putting the latter on her head and the former on the table, the old woman, after telling Oliver that she had

come to sit up with him, drew her chair close to the fire and went off into a series of short naps.

And thus the night crept slowly on. Oliver lay awake for some time counting the little circles of light, which the reflection of the rushlight-shade threw upon the ceiling ; or tracing with his languid eyes the pattern of the paper on the wall. The darkness and the deep stillness of the room were very solemn ; and as they brought into the boy's mind the thought that death had been hovering there for many days and nights, and might yet fill it with the gloom and dread of his awful presence, he turned his face upon the pillow and fervently prayed to Heaven.

Gradually, he fell into deep sleep.

It had been bright day, for hours, when Oliver opened his eyes ; and when he did so he felt cheerful and happy. The crisis of the disease was safely past. He belonged to the world again.

In three days' time, he was able to sit in an easy-chair, well propped up with pillows ; and, as he was still too weak to walk, Mrs. Bedwin had him carried downstairs into the little housekeeper's room, which belonged to her. Having him sat, here, by the fireside, the good old lady sat herself down too ; and, being in a state of considerable delight at seeing him so much better, forthwith began to cry most violently.

"Never mind me, my dear," said the old lady. "I'm only having a regular good cry. There, it's all over now, and I'm quite comfortable."

"You're very, very kind to me, ma'am," said Oliver.

"Well, never you mind that, my dear," said the old lady, "that's got nothing to do with your broth, and it's full time you had it, for the doctor says Mr. Brownlow may come in to see you this morning, and we must get up our best looks, because the better we look the more he'll be pleased."

And with this, the old lady applied herself to warming up, in a little saucepan, a basin full of broth.

XXIV. THE LIKENESS.

"ARE you fond of pictures, dear?" inquired the old lady, seeing that Oliver had fixed his eyes most intently on a portrait which hung against the wall, just opposite his chair.

"I don't quite know, ma'am," said Oliver, without taking his eyes from the canvas; "I have seen so few that I hardly know. What a beautiful face that lady's is! Is—is that a likeness?"

"Yes," said the old lady, looking up for a moment from the broth; "that's a portrait."

"Whose, ma'am?" asked Oliver.

"Why, really, my dear, I don't know," answered the old lady, in a good-humoured manner. "It's not a likeness of anybody that you or I know, I expect. It seems to strike your fancy, dear."

"It is so very pretty," replied Oliver.

"Why, sure you're not afraid of it?" said the old lady, observing, in great surprise, the look of awe with which the child regarded the painting.

"Oh no, no," returned Oliver quickly; "but the eyes look so sorrowful; and where I sit, they seem fixed upon me. It makes my heart beat," added Oliver in a low voice, "as if it was alive, and wanted to speak to me, but couldn't."

"Save us!" exclaimed the old lady, starting; "don't talk in that way, child. You're weak and nervous after your illness. Let me wheel your chair round to the other side; and then you won't see it. There!" said the old

lady, suiting the action to the word ; " you don't see it now, at all events."

Oliver *did* see it in his mind's eye as distinctly as if he had not altered his position ; but he thought it better not to worry the kind old lady ; so he smiled gently when she looked at him ; and Mrs. Bedwin, satisfied that he felt more comfortable, salted and broke bits of toasted bread into the broth. Oliver had scarcely swallowed the last spoonful, when there came a soft tap at the door. " Come in," said the old lady ; and in walked Mr. Brownlow.

Now the old gentleman came in as brisk as need be ; but, he had no sooner raised his spectacles on his forehead, and thrust his hands behind the skirts of his dressing-gown to take a good long look at Oliver, than his countenance underwent a very great variety of odd contortions. Oliver looked very worn and shadowy from sickness.

" Poor boy, poor boy !" said Mr. Brownlow, clearing his throat. " I'm rather hoarse this morning, Mrs. Bedwin. I'm afraid I have caught cold."

" I hope not, sir," said Mrs. Bedwin. " Everything you have had has been well aired, sir."

" I don't know, Bedwin. I don't know," said Mr. Brownlow ; " I rather think I had a damp napkin at dinner-time yesterday ; but never mind that. How do you feel, my dear ?"

" Very happy, sir," replied Oliver. " And very grateful indeed, sir, for your goodness to me."

" Good boy," said Mr. Brownlow, stoutly. " Have you given him any nourishment, Bedwin ? Any slops, eh ?"

" He has just had a basin of beautiful strong broth, sir," replied Mrs. Bedwin, drawing herself up slightly, and laying a strong emphasis on the last word, to intimate that between slops and broth there existed no connection whatsoever.

“Ugh!” said Mr. Brownlow, with a slight shudder.
“Why, what’s this? Bedwin, look there!”



As he spoke, he pointed hastily to the picture above Oliver's head, and then to the boy's face. There was its

living copy. The eyes, the head, the mouth; every feature was the same. The expression was, for the instant, so precisely alike, that the minutest line seemed copied with a startling accuracy!

Oliver knew not the cause of this sudden exclamation; for, not being strong enough to bear the start it gave him, he fainted away.

[Fagin was very angry when the two boys returned without Oliver. He at once made inquiries, and found that the boy had been taken off by Mr. Brownlow to his home at Pentonville. Then the Jew laid a plan for getting Oliver back. A young woman named Nancy agreed to help him. She was the companion of Bill Sikes, a robber whom Fagin knew.]

XXV. A TALK WITH MR. BROWNLOW.

THEY were happy days, those of Oliver's recovery. Everything was so quiet, and neat, and orderly; everybody so kind and gentle; that after the noise in the midst of which he had always lived, it seemed like Heaven itself. He was no sooner strong enough to put his clothes on properly, than Mr. Brownlow caused a complete new suit, and a new cap, and a new pair of shoes, to be provided for him. As Oliver was told that he might do what he liked with the old clothes, he gave them to a servant who had been very kind to him, and asked her to sell them to a Jew, and keep the money for herself.

One evening, as he was sitting talking to Mrs. Bedwin, there came a message down from Mr. Brownlow, that if Oliver Twist felt pretty well, he should like to see him in his study, and talk to him a little while.

"Bless us, and save us! Wash your hands, and let me part your hair nicely for you, child," said Mrs. Bedwin. "Dear heart alive! If we had known he would have asked for you, we would have put you a clean collar on, and made you as smart as sixpence!"

Oliver did as the old lady bade him; and tapped at the study door. On Mr. Brownlow calling to him to come in, he found himself in a little back room, quite full of books. There was a table drawn up before the window, at which Mr. Brownlow was seated reading. When he saw Oliver, he pushed the book away from him, and told him to come near the table, and sit down.

"Now," said Mr. Brownlow, speaking in a kind, but serious manner, "I want you to pay great attention, my boy, to what I am going to say. I shall talk to you without any reserve; because I am sure you are as well able to understand me as many older persons would be."

"Oh, don't tell me you are going to send me away, sir, pray!" exclaimed Oliver. "Don't turn me out of doors to wander in the streets again. Let me stay here and be a servant. Don't send me back to the wretched place I came from. Have mercy upon a poor boy, sir!"

"My dear child," said the old gentleman, moved by the warmth of Oliver's sudden appeal; "you need not be afraid of my deserting you, unless you give me cause."

"I never, never will, sir," interposed Oliver.

"I hope not," rejoined the old gentleman. "I do not think you ever will. I have been deceived, before, in the objects whom I have endeavoured to benefit; but I feel strongly disposed to trust you, nevertheless; you say you are an orphan, without a friend in the world; all the inquiries I have been able to make, confirm the statement. Let me hear your story; where you come from; who brought you up; and how you got into the company in

which I found you. Speak the truth, and you shall not be friendless while I live."

Oliver's sobs checked his utterance for some minutes; when he was on the point of beginning to relate how he had been brought up at the farm, and carried to the work-house by Mr. Bumble, an impatient little double-knock was heard at the street-door; and the servant, running upstairs, announced Mr. Grimwig.

"Is he coming up?" inquired Mr. Brownlow.

"Yes, sir," replied the servant. "He asked if there were any muffins in the house; and when I told him yes, he said he had come to tea."

Mr. Brownlow smiled; and, turning to Oliver, said that Mr. Grimwig was an old friend of his, and he must not mind his being a little rough in his manners: for he was a worthy creature, as he had reason to know.

XXVI. MR. GRIMWIG.

At this moment, there walked into the room, supporting himself by a thick stick, a stout old gentleman, rather lame in one leg. He had a manner of screwing his head on one side when he spoke, and of looking out of the corners of his eyes at the same time, which reminded the beholder of a parrot. In this attitude he fixed himself, the moment he made his appearance; and, holding out a small piece of orange-peel at arm's length, exclaimed, in a growling, discontented voice:

"Look here! do you see this! I can't call at a man's house but I find a piece of this poor surgeon's-friend on the stair-case! I've been lamed with orange-peel once, and I know orange-peel will be my death at last. It will,

sir; orange-peel will be my death, or I'll be content to eat my own head, sir! I'll eat my head, sir," repeated Mr. Grimwig, striking his stick upon the ground. "Hallo! what's that?" looking at Oliver, and retreating a pace or two.

"This is young Oliver Twist, whom we were speaking about," said Mr. Brownlow.

Oliver bowed.

"You don't mean to say that's the boy who had the fever, I hope?" said Mr. Grimwig, recoiling a little more. "Wait a minute! Don't speak! Stop—" continued Mr. Grimwig, abruptly, losing all dread of the fever in his triumph at the discovery; "that's the boy who had the orange! If that's not the boy, sir, who had the orange, and threw this bit of peel upon the staircase, I'll eat my head, and his too."

"No, no, he has not had one," said Mr. Brownlow, laughing. "Come! Put down your hat, and speak to my young friend."

Still keeping his stick in his hand, he sat down; and, opening a double eye-glass, which he wore attached to a broad black riband, took a view of Oliver: who, seeing that he was the object of inspection, coloured, and bowed again.

"That's the boy, is it?" said Mr. Grimwig, at length.

"That is the boy," replied Mr. Brownlow.

"How are you, boy?" said Mr. Grimwig.

"A great deal better, thank you, sir," replied Oliver.

Mr. Brownlow asked Oliver to step downstairs and tell Mrs. Bedwin they were ready for tea; which, as he did not half like the visitor's manner, he was very happy to do.

"He is a nice-looking boy, is he not?" inquired Mr. Brownlow.

"I don't know," replied Mr. Grimwig, pettishly.

“Don’t know?”

“No. I don’t know. I never see any difference in boys.”

As Mr. Grimwig, at tea, was graciously pleased to express his entire approval of the muffins, matters went on very smoothly; and Oliver, who made one of the party, began to feel more at his ease than he had yet done in the fierce old gentleman’s presence.

“And when are you going to hear a full, true, and particular account of the life and adventures of Oliver Twist?” asked Grimwig of Mr. Brownlow, at the conclusion of the meal: looking sideways at Oliver.

“To-morrow morning,” replied Mr. Brownlow. “I would rather he was alone with me at the time. Come up to me to-morrow morning at ten o’clock, my dear.”

“Yes, sir,” replied Oliver. He answered with some hesitation, because he was confused by Mr. Grimwig’s looking so hard at him.

“I’ll tell you what,” whispered that gentleman to Mr. Brownlow; “he won’t come up to you to-morrow morning. I saw him hesitate. He is deceiving you, my good friend.”

“I’ll answer for that boy’s truth with my life!” said Mr. Brownlow, knocking the table.

“And I for his falsehood with my head!” rejoined Mr. Grimwig, knocking the table also.

“We shall see,” said Mr. Brownlow, checking his rising anger.

“We will,” replied Mr. Grimwig, with a provoking smile; “we will.”

XXVII. OLIVER GOES ON AN ERRAND.

As fate would have it, Mrs. Bedwin chanced to bring in, at this moment, a small parcel of books which Mr. Brownlow had that morning purchased. Having laid them on the table, she prepared to leave the room.

"Stop the boy, Mrs. Bedwin!" said Mr. Brownlow; "there is something to go back."

"He has gone, sir," replied Mrs. Bedwin.

"Dear me, I am very sorry for that," exclaimed Mr. Brownlow; "I particularly wished those books to be returned to-night."

"Send Oliver with them," said Mr. Grimwig, with a smile; "he will be sure to deliver them safely, you know."

"Yes; do let me take them, if you please, sir," said Oliver. "I'll run all the way, sir."

"You *shall* go, my dear," said the old gentleman. "The books are on a chair by my table. Fetch them down."

Oliver, delighted to be of use, brought down the books under his arm in a great bustle; and waited, cap in hand, to hear what message he was to take.

"You are to say," said Mr. Brownlow, glancing steadily at Grimwig; "you are to say that you have brought those books back; and that you have come to pay the four pound ten I owe him. This is a five-pound note, so you will have to bring me back ten shillings change."

"I won't be ten minutes, sir," replied Oliver, eagerly. Having buttoned up the bank-note in his jacket-pocket, and placed the books carefully under his arm, he made a respectful bow, and left the room. Mrs. Bedwin followed him to the street-door, giving him many directions about

the nearest way, and the name of the bookseller, and the name of the street, all of which Oliver said he clearly understood.

"Bless his sweet face!" said the old lady, looking after him. "I can't bear, somehow, to let him go out of my sight."

At this moment, Oliver looked gaily round, and nodded before he turned the corner. The old lady, closing the door, went back to her own room.

"Let me see; he'll be back in twenty minutes, at the longest," said Mr. Brownlow, pulling out his watch, and placing it on the table. "It will be dark by that time."

"Oh! you really expect him to come back, do you?" inquired Mr. Grimwig.

"Don't you?" asked Mr. Brownlow, smiling.

The spirit of contradiction was strong in Mr. Grimwig's breast at the moment; and it was rendered stronger by his friend's confident smile.

"No," he said, smiting the table with his fist, "I do not. The boy has a new suit of clothes on his back; a set of valuable books under his arm; and a five-pound note in his pocket. He'll join his old friends the thieves, and laugh at you. If ever that boy returns to this house, sir, I'll eat my head."

With these words, he drew his chair closer to the table; and there the two friends sat, in silent expectation, with the watch between them.

It grew so dark, that the figures on the dial-plate were scarcely discernible; but there the two old gentlemen continued to sit in silence; with the watch between them.

XXVIII. NANCY AND BILL SIKES FIND OLIVER.

MEANWHILE, Oliver Twist, little dreaming that he was within so very short a distance of the Merry Old Gentleman [the Jew], was on his way to the bookstall.

He was walking along; thinking how happy and contented he ought to feel; and how much he would give for only one look at poor little Dick; who, starved and beaten, might be weeping bitterly at that very moment; when he was startled by a young woman screaming out very loud, "Oh, my dear brother!" and he had hardly looked up, to see what the matter was, when he was stopped by having a pair of arms thrown tight round his neck.

"Don't," cried Oliver, struggling. "Let go of me. Who is it? What are you stopping me for?"

The only reply to this, was a great number of loud lamentations from the young woman who had embraced him.

"Oh my gracious!" said the young woman, "I've found him! Oh! Oliver! Oliver! Oh you naughty boy, to make me suffer sich distress on your account! Come home, dear, come. Oh, I've found him. I've found him!" With these exclamations, the young woman burst into another fit of crying, and got so dreadfully hysterical, that a couple of women who came up at the moment asked a butcher's boy with a shiny head of hair anointed with suet, who was also looking on, whether he didn't think he had better run for the doctor.

"Oh, no, no, never mind," said the young woman, grasping Oliver's hand; "I'm better now. Come home directly, you cruel boy! Come!"

"What's the matter, ma'am?" inquired one of the women.

"Oh, ma'am," replied the young woman, "he ran away, near a month ago, from his parents, who are hard-working and respectable people; and went and joined a set of thieves and bad characters; and almost broke his mother's heart."

"Young wretch!" said one woman.

"I'm not," replied Oliver, greatly alarmed. "I don't know her. I haven't any sister, or father and mother either. I'm an orphan; I live at Pentonville."

"Oh, only hear him, how he braves it out!" cried the young woman.

"Why, it's Nancy!" exclaimed Oliver; who now saw her face for the first time; and started back, in irrepressible astonishment.

"You see he knows me!" cried Nancy, appealing to the bystanders. "He can't help himself. Make him come home, there's good people, or he'll kill his dear mother and father, and break my heart!"

"What's this?" said a man, bursting out of a beer-shop, with a white dog at his heels; "young Oliver! Come home to your poor mother, you young dog! Come home directly."

"I don't belong to them. I don't know them. Help! help!" cried Oliver, struggling in the man's powerful grasp.

"Help!" repeated the man. "Yes; I'll help you, you young rascal! What books are these? You've been a stealing 'em, have you? Give 'em here." With these words, the man tore the volumes from his grasp, and struck him on the head.

"That's right!" cried a looker-on, from a garret-window. "That's the only way of bringing him to his senses!"

"To be sure!" cried a sleepy-faced carpenter, casting an approving look at the garret-window.

"It'll do him good!" said the two women.

"And he shall have it, too!" rejoined the man, administering another blow, and seizing Oliver by the collar. "Come on, you young villain! Here, Bull's-eye, mind him, boy! mind him!"

Weak with recent illness; stupefied by the blows; terrified by the fierce growling of the dog, and the brutality of the man, and overpowered by the conviction of the bystanders that he really was the hardened little wretch he was described to be; what could one poor child do? Darkness had set in—it was a low neighbourhood—no help was near—resistance was useless. In another moment he was dragged into dark narrow courts, and forced along them at a pace which rendered the few cries he dared to give utterance to, wholly unintelligible. It was of little moment, indeed, whether they were intelligible or no, for there was nobody to care for them, had they been ever so plain.

* * * * *

The gas-lamps were lighted, Mrs. Bedwin was waiting anxiously at the open door, the servant had run up the street twenty times to see if there were any traces of Oliver, and still the two old gentlemen sat, perseveringly, in the dark parlour: with the watch between them.

XXIX. RESTORED TO FAGIN.

THE narrow streets and courts, at length, terminated in a large open cattle market. Sikes slackened his pace when they reached this spot. Turning to Oliver, he roughly commanded him to take hold of Nancy's hand.

"Do you hear?" growled Sikes, as Oliver hesitated, and looked round.

They were in a dark corner, quite out of the track of

passengers. Oliver saw, but too plainly, that resistance would be of no avail. He held out his hand, which Nancy clasped tight in hers.

"Give me the other," says Sikes, seizing Oliver's unoccupied hand. "Here, Bull's-eye!"

The dog looked up and growled.

"See here, boy," said Sikes, putting his other hand to Oliver's throat, "if he speaks ever so soft a word, hold him! D'ye mind?"

The dog growled again, and, licking his lips, eyed Oliver as if he were anxious to attach himself to his windpipe without delay.

It was Smithfield that they were crossing. The night was dark and foggy; the lights in the shops could scarcely struggle through the heavy mist which shrouded the streets and houses in gloom. At length they turned into a very filthy narrow street, nearly full of old-clothes shops; the dog running forward, as if conscious that there was no further occasion for his keeping on guard, stopped before the door of a shop that was closed. The house was in a ruinous condition; and on the door was nailed a board, intimating that it was to let; which looked as if it had hung there for many years.

"All right," cried Sikes, glancing cautiously about.

Nancy stooped below the shutters; and Oliver heard the sound of a bell. They crossed to the opposite side of the street: and stood for a few moments under a lamp. A noise, as if a sash window were gently raised, was heard; and soon afterwards the door softly opened. Mr. Sikes then seized the terrified boy by the collar with very little ceremony; and all three were quickly inside the house.

The passage was perfectly dark. They waited, while the person who had let them in chained and barred the door.

"Anybody here?" inquired Sikes.

"No," replied a voice, which Oliver thought he had heard before.

"Is the old 'un here?" asked the robber.

"Yes," replied the voice; "and won't he be glad to see you! Oh, no!"

The style of this reply, as well as the voice which delivered it, seemed familiar to Oliver's ears: but it was impossible to distinguish even the form of the speaker in the darkness.

In another minute the form of Mr. John Dawkins, otherwise the Artful Dodger, appeared. He bore in his right hand a tallow candle, stuck in the end of a cleft stick.

They crossed an empty kitchen; and, opening the door of a low earthy-smelling room, which seemed to have been built in a small back-yard, were received with a shout of laughter.

XXX. IN THE JEW'S DEN AGAIN.

"OH, my wig, my wig!" cried Master Charles Bates, from whose lungs the laughter had proceeded; "here he is! oh, cry, here he is! Oh, Fagin, look at him; Fagin, do look at him! I can't bear it; it is such a jolly game, I can't bear it. Hold me, somebody, while I laugh it out."

Master Bates laid himself flat on the floor, and kicked convulsively for five minutes, in an ecstasy of joy. Then, jumping to his feet, he snatched the cleft stick from the Dodger, and, advancing to Oliver, viewed him round and round; while the Jew, taking off his night-cap, made a great number of low bows to the bewildered boy. The Artful, meantime, rifled Oliver's pockets.

“Delighted to see you looking so well, my dear,” said the Jew, bowing with mock humility. “The Artful shall



OLIVER BROUGHT BACK TO FAGIN.

give you another suit, my dear, for fear you should spoil that Sunday one. Why didn't you write, my dear, and

say you were coming? We'd have got something warm for supper."

At this, Master Bates roared again; so loud, that Fagin himself relaxed: and even the Dodger smiled; but as the Artful drew forth the five-pound note at that instant, it is doubtful whether the sally or the discovery awakened his merriment.

"Hallo! what's that?" inquired Sikes, stepping forward as the Jew seized the note. "That's mine, Fagin."

"No, no, my dear," said the Jew. "Mine, Bill, mine. You shall have the books."

"Come! Hand over, will you?" said Sikes.

"This is hardly fair, Bill; hardly fair, is it, Nancy?" inquired the Jew.

"Fair, or not fair," retorted Sikes, "hand over, I tell you!"

Sikes plucked the note from between the Jew's finger and thumb; and, looking the old man coolly in the face, folded it up small, and tied it in his neckerchief.

"That's for our share of the trouble," said Sikes; "and not half enough. You may keep the books, if you're fond of reading."

"They belong to the old gentleman," said Oliver, wringing his hands; "to the good, kind, old gentleman who took me into his house, and had me nursed, when I was near dying of the fever. Oh, pray send them back; send him back the books and money. Keep me here all my life long; but pray, pray send them back. He'll think I stole them; the old lady: all of them who were so kind to me: will think I stole them. Oh, do have mercy upon me, and send them back!"

With these words, which were uttered with all the energy of passionate grief, Oliver fell upon his knees at the Jew's feet; and beat his hands together, in perfect desperation.

"The boy's right," remarked Fagin, knitting his shaggy eyebrows into a hard knot. "You're right, Oliver, you're right; they *will* think you have stole 'em. Ha! ha!" chuckled the Jew, rubbing his hands; "it couldn't have happened better if we had chosen our time!"

"Of course it couldn't," replied Sikes. "It's all right enough. They're soft-hearted psalm-singers, or they wouldn't have taken him in at all; and they'll ask no questions after him, fear they should be obliged to prosecute him. He's safe enough."

Oliver had looked from one to the other, while these words were being spoken, as if he could scarcely understand what passed; but when Bill Sikes concluded, he jumped suddenly to his feet, and tore wildly from the room: uttering shrieks for help, which made the bare old house echo to the roof.

"Keep back the dog, Bill!" cried Nancy, springing before the door, and closing it, as the Jew and his two pupils darted out in pursuit; "keep back the dog; he'll tear the boy to pieces."

"Serve him right!" cried Sikes, struggling to disengage himself from the girl's grasp. "Stand off from me, or I'll split your head against the wall."

"I don't care for that, Bill; I don't care for that," screamed the girl, struggling violently with the man: "the child shan't be torn down by the dog, unless you kill me first."

"Shan't he!" said Sikes, setting his teeth fiercely. "I'll soon do that, if you don't keep off."

The housebreaker flung the girl from him to the further end of the room; just as the Jew and the two boys returned: dragging Oliver among them.

XXXI. NANCY TAKES OLIVER'S PART.

"So you wanted to get away, my dear, did you?" said the Jew, taking up a jagged and knotted club, which lay in a corner of the fire-place; "eh?"

Oliver made no reply. But he watched the Jew's motions; and breathed quickly.

"Wanted to get assistance; called for the police; did you?" sneered the Jew, catching the boy by the arm. "We'll cure you of that, my young master."

The Jew inflicted a smart blow on Oliver's shoulders with the club; and was raising it for a second, when the girl, rushing forward, wrested it from his hand. She flung it into the fire, with a force that brought some of the glowing coals whirling out into the room.

"I won't stand by and see it done, Fagin," cried the girl. "You've got the boy, and what more would you have?—Let him be—let him be, or I shall put that mark on some of you, that will bring me to the gallows before my time."

The girl stamped her foot violently on the floor as she vented this threat; and with her lips compressed, and her hands clenched, looked alternately at the Jew and the other robber: her face quite colourless from the passion of rage into which she had gradually worked herself.

"Why, Nancy!" said the Jew, in a soothing tone; after a pause, during which he and Mr. Sikes had stared at one another in a disconcerted manner; "you—you're more clever than ever to-night. Ha! ha! my dear, you are acting beautifully."

"Am I!" said the girl. "I wish I had been struck dead in the street, before I had lent a hand in bringing him

here. He's a thief, a liar : all that's bad, from this night forth. Isn't that enough without blows ? ”

“ Come, come, Sikes,” said the Jew, appealing to him ; “ we must have civil words ; civil words, Bill.”

“ Civil words ! ” cried the girl, whose passion was frightful to see. “ Civil words, you villain ! Yes ; you deserve 'em from me. I thieved for you when I was a child not half as old as this ! ” pointing to Oliver. “ I have been in the same trade, and in the same service for twelve years since. Don't you know it ? Speak out ! don't you know it ? ”

The girl made such a rush at the Jew as would probably have left marks of her revenge upon him, had not her wrists been seized by Sikes at the right moment ; upon which, she made a few struggles : and fainted.

“ She's all right now,” said Sikes, laying her down in a corner. “ She's uncommon strong in the arms when she's up in this way.”

“ It's the worst of having to do with women,” said the Jew, replacing his club. “ Charley, show Oliver to bed.”

“ I suppose he'd better not wear his best clothes to-morrow, Fagin, had he ? ” inquired Charley Bates.

“ Certainly not,” replied the Jew.

Master Bates led Oliver into an adjacent kitchen, where there were two or three of the beds on which he had slept before ; and here, with many bursts of laughter, he produced an old suit of clothes.

“ Pull off the smart ones,” said Charley, “ and I'll give 'em to Fagin to take care of. What fun it is ! ”

Poor Oliver unwillingly complied. Master Bates, rolling up the new clothes under his arm, departed from the room ; leaving Oliver in the dark ; and locking the door behind him.

The noise of Charley's laughter might have kept many

people awake, under more happy circumstances than those in which Oliver was placed. But he was sick and weary; and he soon fell sound asleep.

XXXII. FIVE GUINEAS REWARD.

THE very first paragraph upon which Mr. Bumble's eyes rested, as he composed himself to read the paper, was the following advertisement.

"FIVE GUINEAS REWARD.

"WHEREAS a young boy, named Oliver Twist, absconded, or was enticed, on Thursday evening last, from his home, at Pentonville; and has not since been heard of. The above reward will be paid to any person who will give such information as will lead to the discovery of the said Oliver Twist, or tend to throw any light upon his previous history, in which the advertiser is, for many reasons, warmly interested."

And then followed a full description of Oliver's dress, person, appearance, and disappearance: with the name and address of Mr. Brownlow at full length.

Mr. Bumble opened his eyes; read the advertisement, slowly, and carefully, three times; and in something more than five minutes was on his way to Pentonville.

"Is Mr. Brownlow at home?" inquired Mr. Bumble of the girl who opened the door.

Mr. Bumble no sooner uttered Oliver's name, in explanation of his errand, than Mrs. Bedwin, who had been listening at the parlour door, hastened into the passage in a breathless state.

"Come in—come in," said the old lady; "I knew we should hear of him. Poor dear! I knew we should! I was certain of it. Bless his heart! I said so, all along."

Having said this, the worthy old lady hurried back into the parlour again, and, seating herself on a sofa, burst into tears. The girl had run upstairs meanwhile, and now returned with a request that Mr. Bumble would follow her immediately—which he did.

He was shown into the little back study, where sat Mr. Brownlow and his friend Mr. Grimwig. The latter gentleman at once burst into the exclamation :

“A beadle! A parish beadle, or I’ll eat my head.”

“Pray don’t interrupt just now,” said Mr. Brownlow. “Take a seat, will you? Now, sir, you come in consequence of having seen the advertisement?”

“Yes, sir,” said Mr. Bumble.

“And you *are* a beadle, are you not?” inquired Mr. Grimwig.

“I am a beadle, gentlemen,” rejoined Mr. Bumble, proudly.

“Of course,” observed Mr. Grimwig aside to his friend, “I knew he was. A beadle all over!”

Mr. Brownlow gently shook his head to impose silence on his friend, and resumed :

“Do you know where this poor boy is now?”

“No more than nobody,” replied Mr. Bumble.

“Well, what *do* you know of him?” inquired the old gentleman. “Speak out, my friend, if you have anything to say. What *do* you know of him?”

XXXIII. SAD HEARTS.

MR. BUMBLE put down his hat; unbuttoned his coat; folded his arms; and after a few moments’ reflection, commenced his story.

It would be tedious if given in the beadle's words—occupying, as it did, some twenty minutes in the telling; but the sum and substance of it was that Oliver was a foundling, born of low and vicious parents; that he had from his birth displayed no better qualities than treachery, ingratitude, and malice; that he had terminated his brief career in the place of his birth, by making a cowardly attack on an unoffending lad; and running away in the night-time from his master's house. In proof of his really being the person he represented himself, Mr. Bumble laid upon the table the papers he had brought to town; and, folding his arms again, awaited Mr. Brownlow's observations.

"I fear it is all too true," said the old gentleman sorrowfully. "This is not much for your intelligence; but I would gladly have given you treble the money if it had been favourable to the boy."

Mr. Bumble shook his head gravely, and pocketing the five guineas, withdrew.

Mr. Brownlow paced the room to and fro for some minutes; evidently so much disturbed by the beadle's tale, that even Mr. Grimwig forbore to vex him further.

At length he stopped, and rang the bell violently.

"Mrs. Bedwin," said Mr. Brownlow, when the house-keeper appeared; "that boy, Oliver, is an impostor."

"It can't be, sir. It cannot be," said the old lady energetically.

"I tell you he is," retorted the old gentleman. "What do you mean by can't be? We have just heard a full account of him from his birth; and he has been a thorough-paced little villain all his life."

"I never will believe it, sir," replied the old lady, firmly. "Never!"

"You old women never believe anything but quack-

doctors and lying story-books," growled Mr. Grimwig. "I knew it all along. Why didn't you take my advice in the beginning; you would, if he hadn't had a fever, I suppose, eh? He was interesting, wasn't he? Interesting! Bah!" And Mr. Grimwig poked the fire with a flourish.

"He was a dear, grateful, gentle child, sir," retorted Mrs. Bedwin, indignantly, when she was stopped by Mr. Brownlow.

"Silence!" said the old gentleman, feigning an anger he was far from feeling. "Never let me hear the boy's name again. I rang to tell you that. Never. Never, on any pretence, mind! You may leave the room, Mrs. Bedwin. Remember, I am in earnest."

There were sad hearts at Mr. Brownlow's that night.

Oliver's heart sank within him, when he thought of his good kind friends; it was well for him that he could not know what they had heard, or it might have broken outright.

[Some time after Oliver had been entrapped into the Jew's wretched quarters, Bill Sikes planned with another robber, named Toby Crackit, to commit a burglary. He intended to make a boy enter the house by a small window, and unbar the door. He asked Fagin to find him a boy for this purpose, and the old Jew, wishing to make little Oliver a thief, promised to send him to Sikes early the next day.]

XXXIV. OLIVER IS DELIVERED OVER TO SIKES.

WHEN Oliver awoke in the morning, he was a good deal surprised to find that a new pair of shoes, with strong thick soles, had been placed at his bedside, and that his

old ones had been removed. At first he was pleased with the discovery, hoping that it might be the forerunner of his release; but on his sitting down to breakfast, the Jew told him, in a tone and manner which increased his alarm, that he was to be taken to the residence of Bill Sikes that night.

"To—to—stop there, sir?" asked Oliver, anxiously.

"No, no, my dear. Not to stop there," replied the Jew.

"We shouldn't like to lose you. Don't be afraid, Oliver, you shall come back to us again. Ha, ha, ha! We won't be so cruel as to send you away, my dear. Oh no, no!"

The old man, who was stooping over the fire toasting a piece of bread, looked round as he bantered Oliver thus, and chuckled, as if to show that he knew he would still be very glad to get away if he could.

"I suppose," said the Jew, fixing his eyes on Oliver, "you want to know what you're going to Bill's for—eh, my dear?"

Oliver boldly said, Yes, he did want to know.

"Why, do you think?" inquired Fagin, parrying the question.

"Indeed I don't know, sir," replied Oliver.

"Bah!" said the Jew. "Wait till Bill tells you, then."

The Jew seemed much vexed by Oliver's not expressing any greater curiosity on the subject: but the truth is, that, although he felt very anxious, he was too much confused to make any further inquiries just then. He had no further opportunity; for the Jew remained very surly and silent till night, when he prepared to go abroad.

"You may burn a candle," said the Jew, putting one upon the table. "And here's a book for you to read, till they come to fetch you. Good night."

"Good night!" replied Oliver, softly.

The Jew walked to the door: looking over his shoulder

at the boy as he went. Suddenly stopping, he called him by his name.

"Take heed, Oliver; take heed!" said the old man, shaking his right hand before him in a warning manner. "He's a rough man, and thinks nothing of blood when his own is up. Whatever falls out, say nothing; and do as he bids you. Mind!"

Oliver leaned his head upon his hand when the old man disappeared, and pondered, with a trembling heart, on the words he had just heard.

He remained lost in thought for some minutes; and then, with a heavy sigh, snuffed the candle: and taking up the book which the Jew had left with him, began to read.

He turned over the leaves. Carelessly at first; but he soon became intent upon the volume. It was a history of the lives and trials of great criminals. Here he read of dreadful crimes that made the blood run cold.

In fear, the boy closed the book, and thrust it from him. Then, falling upon his knees, he prayed Heaven to spare him from such deeds; and rather to will that he should die at once, than be reserved for crimes so fearful and appalling. By degrees, he grew more calm; and besought, in a low and broken voice, that he might be rescued from his present dangers; and that if any aid were to be raised up for a poor outcast boy, who had never known the love of friends or kindred, it might come to him now, when, desolate and deserted, he stood alone in the midst of wickedness and guilt.

He had concluded his prayer, but still remained with his head buried in his hands, when a rustling noise aroused him.

"What's that?" he cried, starting up, and catching sight of a figure standing by the door. "Who's there?"

"Only me," replied a tremulous voice.

Oliver raised the candle above his head: and looked towards the door. It was Nancy.

Oliver saw that she was very pale, and gently inquired if she were ill. The girl threw herself into a chair, with her back towards him: and wrung her hands; but made no reply.

"God forgive me!" she cried after a while, "I never thought of this."

"Has anything happened?" asked Oliver. "Can I help you? I will if I can. I will, indeed."

The girl beat her hands upon her knees, and her feet upon the ground; and suddenly stopping, drew her shawl close round her: and shivered with cold.

Oliver stirred the fire. Drawing her chair close to it, she sat there, for a little time, without speaking; but at length she raised her head, and looked round.

"I don't know what comes over me sometimes," said she, affecting to busy herself in arranging her dress; "it's this damp, dirty room, I think. Now, Nolly dear, are you ready?"

"Am I to go with you?" asked Oliver.

"Yes; I have come from Bill," replied the girl. "You are to go with me."

She continued with great rapidity:

"Remember this! If I could help you, I would; but I have not the power. They don't mean to harm you; and whatever they make you do, is no fault of yours. Give me your hand. Make haste! Your hand!"

She caught the hand which Oliver placed in hers; and, blowing out the light, drew him after her up the stairs. A cab was in waiting; the girl pulled him in with her, and drew the curtains close. The driver wanted no directions, but lashed his horse into full speed, without the delay of an instant. All was so quick and hurried, that he had

scarcely time to think where he was, or how he came there, when the carriage stopped.

For one brief moment, Oliver cast a hurried glance along the empty street, and a cry for help hung upon his lips. But while he hesitated, the opportunity was gone; for he was already in the house, and the door was shut.

XXXV. THE START.

SUPPER being ended—it may be easily conceived that Oliver had no great appetite for it—Mr. Sikes threw himself upon the bed, ordering Nancy to call him at five precisely. Oliver stretched himself in his clothes, by command of the same authority, on a mattress upon the floor; and the girl mending the fire, sat before it, in readiness to rouse them at the appointed time.

For a long time Oliver lay awake, thinking it not impossible that Nancy might seek that opportunity of whispering some further advice; but the girl sat brooding over the fire without moving, save now and then to trim the light. Weary with watching and anxiety, he at length fell asleep.

When he awoke, Sikes was thrusting various articles into the pockets of his great-coat, which hung over the back of a chair, while Nancy was busily engaged in preparing breakfast. It was not yet daylight, for the candle was still burning, and it was quite dark outside. A sharp rain, too, was beating against the window-panes; and the sky looked black and cloudy.

“Now, then!” growled Sikes, as Oliver started up; “half-past five! Look sharp, or you’ll get no breakfast; for it’s late as it is.”

Oliver was not long in making his toilet; and, having

taken some breakfast, replied to a surly inquiry from Sikes, by saying that he was quite ready.

Nancy, scarcely looking at the boy, threw him a handkerchief to tie round his throat; and Sikes gave him a large rough cape to button over his shoulders. Thus attired, he gave his hand to the robber, who, merely pausing to show him that he had the pistol in a side pocket of his great-coat, clasped it firmly in his; and, exchanging a farewell with Nancy, led him away.

XXXVI. ON THE ROAD.

It was a cheerless morning when they got into the street; blowing and raining hard, and the clouds looking dull and stormy. The night had been very wet; for large pools of water had collected in the road, and the kennels were overflowing.

By the time they had turned into the Bethnal Green Road, the day had fairly begun to break. Many of the lamps were already extinguished; a few country waggons were slowly toiling on towards London; and now and then a stage-coach, covered with mud, rattled briskly by. As they approached the City, the noise and traffic gradually increased; and when they threaded the streets between Shoreditch and Smithfield, it had swelled into a roar of sound and bustle.

It was market-morning. The ground was covered nearly ankle-deep with filth and mire; and a thick steam, perpetually rising from the reeking bodies of the cattle, and mingling with the fog, which seemed to rest upon the chimney-tops, hung heavily above.

Mr. Sikes, dragging Oliver after him, elbowed his way through the thickest of the crowd, and bestowed very little

attention on the numerous sights and sounds which so astonished the boy. He pressed steadily onward until they were clear of the turmoil, and had made their way into Holborn.

"Now, young 'un!" said Sikes, looking up at the clock of St. Andrew's Church, "hard upon seven! you must step out. Come, don't lag behind, already, *Lazy-legs!*"

Mr. Sikes accompanied this speech with a jerk at his little companion's wrist; Oliver, quickening his pace into a kind of trot, between a fast walk and a run, kept up with the rapid strides of the housebreaker as well as he could.

They held their course at this rate until they had passed Hyde Park Corner, when Sikes relaxed his pace, until an empty cart, which was at some little distance behind, came up. Seeing "*Hounslow*" written on it, he asked the driver if he would give them a lift as far as Isleworth.

"Jump up," said the man. "Is that your boy?"

"Yes, he's my boy," replied Sikes, looking hard at Oliver, and putting his hand into the pocket where the pistol was.

"Your father walks rather too quick for you, don't he, my man?" inquired the driver, seeing that Oliver was out of breath.

"Not a bit of it," replied Sikes, interposing. "He's used to it. Here, take hold of my hand, Ned. In with you."

Thus addressing Oliver, he helped him into the cart; and the driver, pointing to a heap of sacks, told him to lie down there and rest himself.

As they passed the different milestones, Oliver wondered more and more where his companion meant to take him. Kensington, Hammersmith, Chiswick, Kew Bridge, Brentford, were all passed; and yet they went on as steadily as if they had only just began their journey. At length, they came to a public-house called the *Coach and Horses*; a

little way beyond which another road appeared to turn off. And here the cart stopped.

Sikes dismounted, holding Oliver by the hand all the while; and, lifting him down directly, bestowed a furious look upon him, and rapped the side-pocket with his fist in a very significant manner.

"Good-bye, boy," said the man.

"He's sulky," replied Sikes, giving him a shake; "he's sulky. A young dog! Don't mind him."

"Not I!" rejoined the other, getting into his cart. "It's a fine day, after all." And he drove away.

Sikes waited until he had fairly gone; and then, telling Oliver he might look about him if he wanted, once again led him onward on his journey.

[At last Sikes arrived at Shepperton, where he led the way to Toby Crackit's house. While poor Oliver, tired and frightened, sat by the fire and dozed, the two men first had some supper, and then laid themselves down on chairs for a short nap.

At half past one, the robbers got up, and prepared to go out. They took with them pistols, keys, lantern, crowbar, and other things. It was very dark and foggy when the two men started out of the house, leading Oliver between them.]

XXXVII. THE BURGLARY.

AFTER walking about a quarter of a mile, they stopped before a detached house surrounded by a wall, to the top of which Toby Crackit, scarcely pausing to take breath, climbed in a twinkling.

"The boy next," said Toby. "Hoist him up; I'll catch hold of him."

Before Oliver had time to look round, Sikes had caught him under the arms, and in three or four seconds he and Toby were lying on the grass on the other side. Sikes followed directly. And they stole cautiously towards the house.

And now, for the first time, Oliver, well-nigh mad with grief and terror, saw that housebreaking and robbery, if not murder, were the objects of the expedition. He clasped his hands together, and uttered an exclamation of horror. A mist came before his eyes; the cold sweat stood upon his ashy face; his limbs failed him, and he sank upon his knees.

"Get up!" murmured Sikes, trembling with rage, and drawing the pistol from his pocket. "Get up."

"Oh! for God's sake let me go!" cried Oliver; "let me run away and die in the fields. I will never come near London; never, never! Oh, pray have mercy on me, and do not make me steal. For the love of all the bright Angels that rest in Heaven, have mercy upon me!"

The man to whom this appeal was made, swore a dreadful oath, and had cocked the pistol, when Toby, striking it from his grasp, placed his hand upon the boy's mouth, and dragged him to the house.

"Hush!" cried the man; "it won't answer here. Say another word, and I'll do your business myself with a crack on the head. Here, Bill, wrench the shutter open. He's game enough now, I'll engage."

Sikes plied the crowbar vigorously, but with little noise. After some delay, and some assistance from Toby, the shutter swung open on its hinges.

It was a little lattice window, about five feet and a half above the ground, at the back of the house. It was large enough to admit a boy of Oliver's size.

A very brief exercise of Mr. Sikes's art, sufficed to over-

come the fastening of the lattice; and it soon stood wide open also.

"Now listen," whispered Sikes, drawing a dark lantern from his pocket, and throwing the glare full on Oliver's face; "I'm going to put you through there. Take this light; go softly up the steps, and along the little hall to the street-door; unfasten it, and let us in."

"There's a bolt at the top, you won't be able to reach," interposed Toby. "Stand upon one of the hall chairs."

Sikes put Oliver gently through the window with his feet first; and, without leaving hold of his collar, planted him safely on the floor inside.

"Take this lantern," said Sikes, looking into the room. "You see the stairs?"

Oliver, more dead than alive, gasped out, "Yes." Sikes, pointing to the street-door with the pistol-barrel, briefly advised him to take notice that he was within shot all the way; and that if he faltered, he would fall dead that instant.

"It's done in a minute," said Sikes, in the same low whisper. "Directly I leave go of you, do your work. Hark!"

"What's that?" whispered the other man.

They listened intently.

"Nothing," said Sikes, releasing his hold of Oliver. "Now!"

XXXVIII. PURSUED!

IN the short time he had had to collect his senses, the boy had firmly resolved that, whether he died in the attempt or not, he would make one effort to dart upstairs from the hall, and alarm the family. Filled with this idea, he advanced at once, but stealthily.

"Come back!" suddenly cried Sikes aloud. "Back! back!"

Scared by the sudden breaking of the dead stillness of the place, and by a loud cry which followed it, Oliver let his lantern fall, and knew not whether to advance or fly.

The cry was repeated—a light appeared—a vision of two terrified half-dressed men at the top of the stairs swam before his eyes—a flash—a loud noise—a smoke—a crash somewhere, but where he knew not,—and he staggered back.

Sikes had disappeared for an instant; but he was up again, and had him by the collar before the smoke had cleared away. He fired his own pistol after the men, who were already retreating; and dragged the boy up.

“Clasp your arm tighter,” said Sikes, as he drew him through the window. “Give me a shawl here. “They’ve hit him. Quick! how the boy bleeds!”

Then, came the loud ringing of a bell: mingled with the noise of fire-arms, and the shouts of men, and the sensation of being carried over uneven ground at a rapid pace. And then, the noises grew confused in the distance; and a cold deadly feeling crept over the boy’s heart; and he saw or heard no more.

Sikes rested the body of the wounded boy across his bended knee; and turned his head, for an instant, to look back at his pursuers.

There was little to be made out, in the mist and darkness; but the loud shouting of men vibrated through the air; and the barking of the neighbouring dogs, roused by the sound of the alarm-bell, resounded in every direction.

“Stop!” cried the robber, shouting after Toby Crackit, who, making the best use of his long legs, was already ahead. “Stop!”

The repetition of the word brought Toby to a dead standstill. For he was not quite satisfied that he was beyond the range of pistol-shot; and Sikes was in no mood to be played with.

"Bear a hand with the boy," cried Sikes, beckoning furiously. "Come back!"

At this moment the noise grew louder. Sikes, again looking round, could discern that the men who had given chase were already climbing the gate of the field in which he stood; and that a couple of dogs were some paces in advance of them.

"It's all up, Bill!" cried Toby: "Show 'em your heels." With this parting advice, Mr. Crackit fairly turned tail, and darted off at full speed. Sikes clenched his teeth; took one look round; threw over the prostrate form of Oliver the cape in which he had been hurriedly muffled; ran along the front of the hedge, as if to distract the attention of those behind, from the spot where the boy lay; paused, for a second, before another hedge which met it at right angles, and whirling his pistol high into the air, cleared it at a bound, and was gone.

XXXIX. WHO'S AFRAID?

"Ho, ho, there!" cried a tremulous voice in the rear. "Pincher! Neptune! Come here, come here!"

The dogs, who, in common with their masters, seemed to have no particular relish for the sport in which they were engaged, readily answered to the command. Three men, who had by this time advanced some distance into the field, stopped to take counsel together.

"My advice is," said the fattest man of the party, "that we 'mediately go home again."

"I am agreeable to anything which is agreeable to Mr. Giles," said a shorter man who was very pale in the face, and very polite: as frightened men frequently are.

"I shouldn't wish to appear ill-mannered, gentlemen," said the third, who had called the dogs back, "Mr. Giles ought to know."

"Certainly," replied the shorter man; "and whatever Mr. Giles says, it isn't our place to contradict him."

"You are afraid, Brittles," said Mr. Giles.

"I a'n't," said Brittles.

"You are," said Giles.

The third man brought the dispute to a close.

"I'll tell you what it is, gentlemen," said he, "we're all afraid."

"Speak for yourself, sir," said Mr. Giles, who was the palest of the party.

"So I do," replied the man. "It's natural and proper to be afraid, under such circumstances. I am."

"So am I," said Brittles.

These frank admissions softened Mr. Giles, who at once owned that *he* was afraid: upon which, they all three faced about, and ran back again.

Mr. Giles acted in the double capacity of butler and steward to the old lady of the mansion; and Brittles was a lad of all work: who, having entered her service as a child, was treated as a promising young boy still, though he was something past thirty.

Keeping very close together, and looking round, whenever a fresh gust rattled through the boughs, the three men made the best of their way home, at a good round trot.

XL. ALONE.

THE air grew colder, as day came slowly on; and the mist rolled along the ground like a dense cloud of smoke. The grass was wet; the pathways and low places were all mire

and water ; and the damp breath of an unwholesome wind went by, with a hollow moaning. Still, Oliver lay motionless and insensible on the spot where Sikes had left him.

Morning drew on apace. The air became more sharp and piercing, as its first dull hue glimmered faintly in the sky. The rain came down, thick and fast, and pattered, noisily, among the leafless bushes. But, Oliver felt it not, as it beat against him ; for he still lay stretched, helpless and unconscious, on his bed of clay.

At length, a low cry of pain broke the stillness that prevailed ; and uttering it, the boy awoke. His left arm, rudely bandaged in a shawl, hung heavy and useless at his side : and the bandage was saturated with blood. He was so weak, that he could scarcely raise himself into a sitting posture ; when he had done so, he looked feebly round for help, and groaned with pain.

After a short return of the stupor in which he had been so long plunged, Oliver got upon his feet, and went stumbling onward, he knew not whither.

He staggered on, creeping, between the bars of gates, or through hedge-gaps as they came in his way, until he reached a road. Here the rain began to fall, so heavily, that it roused him.

He looked about, and saw that at no great distance there was a house, which perhaps he could reach. Pitying his condition, they might have compassion on him ; and if they did not, it would be better, he thought, to die near human beings, than in the lonely, open fields. He summoned up all his strength for one last trial ; and bent his faltering steps towards it.

As he drew nearer to this house, a feeling came over him that he had seen it before. He remembered nothing of its details : but the shape and aspect of the building seemed familiar to him.

That garden wall ! On the grass inside he had fallen on his knees last night, and prayed the two men's mercy. It was the very same house they had attempted to rob.

Oliver felt such fear come over him when he recognized the place, that, for the instant, he forgot the agony of his wound, and thought only of flight. Flight ! He could scarcely stand ; and if he were in full possession of all the best powers of his slight and youthful frame, whither could he fly ? He pushed against the garden-gate ; it was unlocked, and swung open on its hinges. He tottered across the lawn ; climbed the steps ; knocked faintly at the door ; and, his whole strength failing him, sunk down against one of the pillars of the little portico.

XII. OLIVER IS BRAVELY CAPTURED.

It happened that about this time, Mr. Giles, Brittles, and the tinker, were recruiting themselves, after the fatigues and terrors of the night, with tea and sundries, in the kitchen. Mr. Giles sat with his legs stretched out before the kitchen fender, leaning his left arm on the table, while with his right, he illustrated a minute account of the robbery, to which his hearers (but especially the cook and housemaid, who were of the party) listened with breathless interest.

[Suddenly] Mr. Giles started violently, in common with the rest of the company. The cook and housemaid screamed.

"It was a knock," said Mr. Giles, assuming perfect serenity. "Open the door, somebody."

Nobody moved.

"It seems a strange sort of a thing, a knock coming at such a time in the morning," said Mr. Giles, surveying the

pale faces which surrounded him, and looking very blank himself; "but the door must be opened. Do you hear, somebody?"

Mr. Giles, as he spoke, looked at Brittles; but that young man probably considered himself nobody; at all events, he tendered no reply. Mr. Giles directed an appealing glance at the tinker; but he had suddenly fallen asleep. The women were out of the question.

"If Brittles would rather open the door, in the presence of witnesses," said Mr. Giles, after a short silence, "I am ready to make one."

"So am I," said the tinker, waking up, as suddenly as he had fallen asleep.

The party took their way upstairs, with the dogs in front; and the two women, who were afraid to stay below, bringing up the rear. By the advice of Mr. Giles, they all talked very loud, to warn any evil-disposed person outside that they were strong in numbers.

Mr. Giles held on fast by the tinker's arm (to prevent his running away, as he pleasantly said), and gave the word of command to open the door. Brittles obeyed; the group, peeping timorously over each other's shoulders, beheld no more formidable object than poor little Oliver Twist, speechless and exhausted.

"A boy!" exclaimed Mr. Giles, valiantly pushing the tinker into the background. "What's the matter with the—eh?—why—Brittles—look here—don't you know?"

Brittles, who had got behind the door to open it, no sooner saw Oliver, than he uttered a loud cry. Mr. Giles, seizing the boy by one leg and one arm (fortunately not the broken limb), lugged him straight into the hall, and deposited him at full length on the floor thereof.

"Here he is!" bawled Giles, calling in a state of great excitement up the staircase; "here's one of the thieves,



OLIVER TWIST AT MRS. MAYLIE'S DOOR.

ma'am! Here's a thief, miss! Wounded, miss! I shot him, miss; and Brittles held the light."

"—In a lantern, miss," cried Brittles, applying one hand

to the side of his mouth, so that his voice might travel the better.

The two women servants ran upstairs to carry the intelligence that Mr. Giles had captured a robber. In the midst of all this noise and commotion, there was heard a sweet female voice, which quelled it, in an instant.

"Giles!" whispered the voice from the stair-head.

"I'm here, miss," replied Mr. Giles. "Don't be frightened, miss; I a'n't much injured. He didn't make a very desperate resistance, miss! I was soon too many for him."

"Hush!" replied the young lady; "you frighten my aunt, as much as the thieves did. Is the poor creature much hurt?"

"He looks as if he was a-going, miss," bawled Brittles, in the same manner as before.

"Hush, pray; there's a good man!" rejoined the young lady. "Wait quietly one instant, while I speak to aunt."

With a footstep as soft and gentle as the voice, the speaker tripped away. She soon returned, with the direction that the wounded person was to be carried, carefully, upstairs to Mr. Giles's room; and that Brittles was to saddle the pony and betake himself instantly to Chertsey: from which place he was to despatch, with all speed, a constable and doctor.

[Dr. Losbern arrived before long, and, of course found that the wounded thief was but a child. This was a fact which the butler, Giles, had not told his mistress. When the doctor had attended to Oliver's wound, he took the ladies (Mrs. Maylie and her niece Rose) upstairs to see him.]

XLII. THE DOCTOR'S VISIT.

THE doctor drew the young lady's arm through one of his ; and offering his disengaged hand to Mrs. Maylie, led them, with much ceremony, upstairs.

"Now," said the doctor, in a whisper, as he softly turned the handle of a bedroom door, "let us hear what you think of him."

Stepping before them, he looked into the room. Motioning them to advance, he closed the door when they had entered, and gently drew back the curtains of the bed. Upon it, in lieu of the ruffian they had expected to behold, there lay a mere child, worn with pain and exhaustion, and sunk into a deep sleep. His wounded arm, bound and splintered up, was crossed upon his breast ; his head reclined upon the other arm, which was half hidden by his long hair, as it streamed over the pillow.

The honest gentleman held the curtain in his hand, and looked on, for a minute or so, in silence. Whilst he was watching the patient thus, the younger lady glided softly past ; and seating herself in a chair by the bedside, gathered Oliver's hair from his face. As she stooped over him, her tears fell upon his forehead.

The boy stirred, and smiled in his sleep, as though these marks of pity and compassion had awakened some pleasant dream of a love and affection he had never known.

"What can this mean?" exclaimed the elder lady. "This poor child can never have been the pupil of robbers!"

"Vice," sighed the surgeon, replacing the curtain, "takes up her abode in many temples ; and who can say that a fair outside shall not enshrine her?"

"But at so early an age!" urged Rose.

"My dear young lady," rejoined the surgeon, mournfully shaking his head; "crime, like death, is not confined to the old and withered alone. The youngest and fairest are too often its chosen victims."

"But, can you—oh! can you really believe that this delicate boy has been the voluntary associate of the worst outcasts of society?" said Rose.

The surgeon shook his head in a manner which intimated that he feared it was very possible; and observing that they might disturb the patient, led the way into an adjoining apartment.

XLIII. NEW FRIENDS FOR OLIVER.

"But even if he has been wicked," pursued Rose, "think how young he is; think that he may never have known a mother's love, or the comfort of a home; and that ill-usage and blows, or the want of bread, may have driven him to herd with men who have forced him to guilt. Aunt, dear aunt, for mercy's sake, think of this, before you let them drag this sick child to a prison, which in any case must be the grave of all his chances of amendment. Oh! as you love me, and know that I have never felt the want of parents in your goodness and affection, but that I might have done so, and might have been equally helpless and unprotected with this poor child, have pity upon him before it is too late!"

"My dear love!" said the elder lady, as she folded the weeping girl to her bosom, "do you think I would harm a hair of his head?"

"Oh, no!" replied Rose eagerly.

"No, surely," said the old lady; "my days are drawing

to their close; and may mercy be shown to me as I show it to others! What can I do to save him, sir?"

"Well," said the doctor, "I shall examine him in your presence, and if, from what he says, we judge that he is a real and thorough bad one (which is more than possible), he shall be left to his fate, without any farther interference on my part, at all events."

"Oh, no, aunt!" entreated Rose.

"Oh yes, aunt!" said the doctor. "Is it a bargain?"

"He cannot be hardened in vice," said Rose; "it is impossible."

"Very good," retorted the doctor; "then so much the more reason for acceding to my proposition."

Finally, the treaty was entered into; and the parties thereunto, sat down to wait, with some impatience, until Oliver should awake.

Hour after hour passed on, and still Oliver slumbered heavily. It was evening, indeed, before the kind-hearted doctor brought them the intelligence, that he was at length sufficiently restored to be spoken to. The boy was very ill, he said, and weak from the loss of blood; but his mind was so troubled with anxiety to disclose something, that he deemed it better to give him the opportunity, than to insist upon his remaining quiet until next morning: which he should otherwise have done.

The conference was a long one. Oliver told them all his simple history, and was often compelled to stop, by pain and want of strength. It was a solemn thing, to hear, in the darkened room, the feeble voice of the sick child recounting evils and calamities which hard men had brought upon him.

Oliver's pillow was smoothed by gentle hands that night; and loveliness and virtue watched him as he slept. He felt calm and happy, and could have died without a murmur.

XLIV. OLIVER AND HIS FRIENDS.

OLIVER's ailings were neither slight nor few. His exposure to the wet and cold had brought on fever and ague; which hung about him for many weeks, and reduced him sadly. But, at length, he began, by slow degrees, to get better, and to be able to say sometimes in a few tearful words, how deeply he felt the goodness of the two sweet ladies, and how he hoped that, when he grew strong and well again, he could do something to show his gratitude.

"Poor fellow!" said Rose, when Oliver had been one day feebly endeavouring to utter the words of thankfulness that rose to his pale lips: "you shall have many opportunities of serving us, if you will. We are going into the country; and my aunt intends that you shall accompany us. The quiet place, the pure air, and all the pleasures and beauties of spring, will restore you in a few days. We will employ you, in a hundred ways, when you can bear the trouble."

"The trouble!" cried Oliver. "Oh! dear lady, if I could but work for you; if I could only give you pleasure by watering your flowers, or watching your birds, or running up and down the whole day long, to make you happy; what would I give to do it!"

"You shall give nothing at all," said Miss Maylie, smiling; "for, as I told you before, we shall employ you in a hundred ways; and if you only take half the trouble to please us, that you promise now, you will make me very happy indeed."

"Happy, ma'am!" cried Oliver, "how kind of you to say so!"

"You will make me happier than I can tell you," replied

the young lady. "To think that my dear good aunt should have been the means of rescuing anyone from such sad misery as you have described to us, would be a pleasure to me; but to know that the object of her compassion was grateful in consequence, would delight me, more than you can well imagine. Do you understand me?" she inquired, watching Oliver's thoughtful face.

"Oh yes, ma'am, yes!" replied Oliver, eagerly; "but I was thinking that I am ungrateful now."

"To whom?" inquired the young lady.

"To the kind gentleman, and the dear old nurse, who took so much care of me before," rejoined Oliver. "If they knew how happy I am, they would be pleased, I am sure."

"I am sure they would, and Mr. Losberne has already been kind enough to promise that, when you are well enough to bear the journey, he will carry you to see them."

"Has he, ma'am?" cried Oliver, his face brightening with pleasure. "I don't know what I shall do for joy when I see their kind faces once again!"

XLV. A DISAPPOINTMENT.

IN a short time Oliver was sufficiently recovered to undergo the fatigue of this expedition. One morning he and Mr. Losberne set out, accordingly, in a little carriage which belonged to Mrs. Maylie.

As Oliver knew the name of the street in which Mr. Brownlow resided, they were enabled to drive straight thither. When the coach turned into it, his heart beat so violently, that he could scarcely draw his breath.

"Now, my boy, which house is it?" inquired Mr. Losberne.

"That! That!" replied Oliver, pointing eagerly out of the window. "The white house. Oh! make haste! Pray

make haste! I feel as if I should die; it makes me tremble so."

"Come, come!" said the good doctor, patting him on the shoulder. "You will see them directly, and they will be overjoyed to find you safe and well."

"Oh! I hope so!" cried Oliver. "They were so good to me; so very, very good to me."

The coach rolled on. It stopped. No; that was the wrong house; the next door. It went on a few paces, and stopped again. Oliver looked up at the windows, with tears of happy expectation coursing down his face.

Alas! the white house was empty, and there was a bill in the window, "To let."

"Knock at the next door," cried Mr. Losberne, taking Oliver's arm in his. "What has become of Mr. Brownlow, who used to live in the adjoining house, do you know?"

The servant did not know, but would go and inquire. She presently returned, and said, that Mr. Brownlow had sold off his goods, and gone to the West Indies, six weeks before. Oliver clasped his hands, and sank feebly backwards.

"Has his housekeeper gone, too?" inquired Mr. Losberne, after a moment's pause.

"Yes, sir;" replied the servant. "The old gentleman, the housekeeper, and a gentleman who was a friend of Mr. Brownlow's, all went together."

"Then turn towards home again," said Mr. Losberne to the driver; "and don't stop to bait the horses till you get out of London!"

"The bookstall keeper, sir?" said Oliver. "I know the way there. See him, pray, sir! Do see him!"

"My poor boy, this is disappointment enough for one day," said the doctor. "Quite enough for both of us. If we go to the bookstall keeper's, we shall certainly find

that he is dead, or has set his house on fire, or run away. No; home again straight!" And in obedience to the doctor's impulse, home they went.

This bitter disappointment caused Oliver much sorrow and grief, even in the midst of his happiness; for he had pleased himself, many times during his illness, with thinking of all that Mr. Brownlow and Mrs. Bedwin would say to him.

XLVI. A HAPPY TIME FOR OLIVER.

THE circumstance occasioned no alteration, however, in the behaviour of his benefactors. After another fortnight, when the fine warm weather had fairly begun, and every tree and flower was putting forth its young leaves and rich blossoms, they departed to a cottage at some distance in the country, and took Oliver with them.

Who can describe the pleasure and delight the sickly boy felt in the balmy air, and among the green hills and rich woods of an inland village!

It was a lovely spot to which they repaired. Oliver, whose days had been spent among squalid crowds, and in the midst of noise and brawling, seemed to enter on a new existence there.

The rose and honeysuckle clung to the cottage walls, the ivy crept round the trunks of the trees, and the garden-flowers perfumed the air. Hard by, was a little church-yard, not crowded by tall unsightly gravestones, but full of humble mounds covered with fresh turf and moss, beneath which the old people of the village lay at rest.

Oliver often wandered here; and, thinking on the wretched grave in which his mother lay, would sometimes sit him down and sob unseen; but when he raised his eyes

to the deep sky overhead, he would cease to think of her as lying in the ground, and would weep for her, sadly, but without pain.

It was a happy time. The days were peaceful and serene; the nights brought with them neither fear nor care; no languishing in a wretched prison, or associating with wretched men; nothing but pleasant and happy thoughts. Every morning he went to a white-headed old gentleman, who lived near the little church: who taught him to read better and to write: and who spoke so kindly, and took such pains, that Oliver could never try enough to please him.

Then he would walk with Mrs. Maylie and Rose, and hear them talk of books; or perhaps sit near them, in some shady place, and listen whilst the young lady read: which he could have done, until it grew too dark to see the letters.

Then he had his own lesson for the next day to prepare; and at this he would work hard, in a little room which looked into the garden, till evening came slowly on, when the ladies would walk out again, and he with them: listening with such pleasure to all they said: and happy if they wanted a flower that he could climb to reach, or had forgotten anything he could run to fetch.

When it became quite dark, and they returned home, the young lady would sit down to the piano and play some pleasant air, or sing, in a low and gentle voice, some old song which it pleased her aunt to hear. There would be no candles lighted at such times as these; and Oliver would sit by one of the windows, listening to the sweet music, in a perfect rapture.

In the morning Oliver would be afoot by six o'clock, roaming the fields, and plundering the hedges far and wide, for nosegays of wild flowers, with which he would

return laden home, and which it took great care and consideration to arrange for the breakfast-table.

There was fresh groundsel, too, for Miss Maylie's birds, with which Oliver would decorate the cages.

When the birds were made all spruce and smart for the day, there was rare cricket-playing sometimes on the green; or, failing that, there was always something to do in the garden or about the plants, to which Oliver applied himself with hearty goodwill until Miss Rose made her appearance, when there were a thousand commendations to be bestowed on all he had done.

So, three months glided away.

XLVII. A CHECK TO THEIR HAPPINESS.

SPRING flew swiftly by, and summer came. The earth had donned her mantle of brightest green, and shed her richest perfumes abroad. It was the prime and vigour of the year—all things were glad and flourishing.

Still the same quiet life went on at the little cottage. Oliver had long since grown stout and healthy; but health or sickness made no difference in his warm feelings to those about him, though they do in the feelings of a great many people. He was still the same gentle, affectionate creature that he had been when pain and suffering had wasted his strength, and when he was dependent for every slight attention and comfort on those who tended him.

One beautiful night, they had taken a longer walk than was customary with them; for the day had been unusually warm, and there was a brilliant moon, and a light wind had sprung up, which was unusually refreshing. Rose had been in high spirits, too, and they had walked on in merry conversation until they had far exceeded their ordi-

nary bounds. Mrs. Maylie being fatigued, they returned more slowly home.

The young lady, merely throwing off her simple bonnet, sat down to the piano as usual. After running over the keys for a few minutes, she fell into a low and very solemn air; and as she played it, they heard a sound as if she were weeping.

"Rose, my dear!" said the elder lady.

Rose made no reply, but played a little quicker, as though the words had roused her from some painful thoughts.

"Rose, my love!" cried Mrs. Maylie, rising hastily and bending over her. "What is this? In tears? My dear child, what distresses you?"

"Nothing, aunt—nothing," replied the young lady. "I don't know what it is; I can't describe it; but I feel——"

"Not ill, my love?" interposed Mrs. Maylie.

"I would not alarm you if I could avoid it," rejoined Rose; "but indeed I have tried very hard, and cannot help this. I fear I *am* ill, aunt."

She was, indeed; for, when candles were brought, they saw that in the very short time which had elapsed since their return home, the hue of her countenance had changed to a marble whiteness. Its expression had lost none of its beauty; but it was changed, and there was an anxious, haggard look about the gentle face which it had never worn before.

Rose was persuaded by her aunt to retire for the night.

"I hope," said Oliver, when Mrs. Maylie returned, "that nothing is the matter? She don't look well to-night, but——"

The old lady motioned to him not to speak; and sitting herself down in a dark corner of the room, remained silent for some time. At length she said in a trembling voice:

"I hope not, Oliver. I have been very happy with her

for some years: too happy, perhaps. She is very ill now, and will be worse, I am sure. My dear, dear Rose! Oh, what should I do without her!"

She gave way to such great grief, that Oliver ventured to beg earnestly that, for the sake of the dear young lady herself, she would be more calm.

"And consider, ma'am," said Oliver, as the tears forced themselves into his eyes. "Oh! consider how young and good she is, and what pleasure and comfort she gives to all about her. I am sure—certain—quite certain—that, for your sake, who are so good yourself; and for her own; and for the sake of all she makes so happy; she will not die. Heaven will never let her die so young."

"Hush!" said Mrs. Maylie, laying her hand on Oliver's head. "You think like a child, poor boy! But you teach me my duty, notwithstanding. I had forgotten it for a moment, Oliver. God's will be done! I love her, and He knows how well!"

Oliver was surprised to see that, as Mrs. Maylie said these words, she checked her lamentations as though by one effort; and drawing herself up as she spoke, became composed and firm.

An anxious night ensued. When morning came, Rose was in the first stage of a high and dangerous fever.

XLVIII. GOOD NEWS AT LAST.

OH! the suspense, the fearful, acute suspense, of standing idly by while the life of one we dearly love, is trembling in the balance! The little cottage was lonely and still. People spoke in whispers; anxious faces appeared at the gate, from time to time; women and children went away in tears.

All the livelong day, and for hours after it had grown dark, Oliver paced softly up and down the garden, raising his eyes every instant to the sick chamber, and shuddering to see the darkened window, looking as if death lay stretched inside. Late at night, Mr. Losberne arrived. "It is hard," said the good doctor, turning away as he spoke; "so young; so much beloved; but there is very little hope."

Another morning. The sun shone brightly: as brightly as if it had looked on no misery or care: and, with every leaf and flower in full bloom about her: with life, and health, and sounds and sights of joy, surrounding her on every side: the fair young creature lay, wasting fast. Oliver crept away to the old churchyard, and sitting down on one of the green mounds, wept and prayed for her, in silence.

There was such peace and beauty in the scene; so much of brightness and mirth in the sunny landscape; such blithesome music in the songs of the summer birds; that, when the boy raised his aching eyes, and looked about, the thought occurred to him, that this was not the time for death; that Rose could surely never die when humbler things were all so glad and gay.

Oliver turned homewards, thinking on the many kindnesses he had received from the young lady, and wishing that the time could come over again, that he might never cease showing her how grateful he was.

When he reached home Mrs. Maylie was sitting in the little parlour. Oliver's heart sank at sight of her; for she had never left the bedside of her niece; and he trembled to think what change could have driven her away. He learnt that she had fallen into a deep sleep, from which she would waken, either to recovery and life, or to bid them farewell and die.

They sat, listening, and afraid to speak, for hours. The untasted meal was removed; and with looks which showed that their thoughts were elsewhere, they watched the sun as he sank lower and lower. Their quick ears caught the sound of an approaching footstep. They both darted to the door, as Mr. Losberne entered.

"What of Rose?" cried the old lady. "Tell me at once! I can bear it; anything but suspense! Oh, tell me!"

"You must compose yourself," said the doctor, supporting her. "Be calm, my dear ma'am, pray."

"Let me go, in God's name! My dear child! She is dead! She is dying!"

"No!" cried the doctor, passionately. "As He is good and merciful, she will live to bless us all, for years to come."

[Miss Maylie had recovered from her illness, when, one day, Nancy heard a conversation between Fagin and a man who went by the false name of Monks. She learnt that Monks hated little Oliver, and that he offered to pay the Jew to bring Oliver up to thieving, in the hope that some day he might go to prison, or even be hung. She learnt, also, that the helpless boy was *the brother* of the wicked man who wished harm to befall him.

Nancy, pitying Oliver, and wishing to save him, determined to tell all to Miss Rose Maylie; which she did. She promised, also, to meet Rose at some future time, at midnight, on London Bridge, if it should be necessary.

Rose, in great distress, decided to write to a friend for advice and help.]

XLIX. A DISCOVERY.

ROSE had taken up the pen, and laid it down again fifty times, and had considered and reconsidered the first line of her letter without writing the first word, when Oliver, who had been walking in the streets with Mr. Giles for a body-guard, entered the room in such breathless haste and violent agitation, as seemed to betoken some new cause of alarm.

"What makes you look so flurried?" asked Rose, advancing to meet him.

"I hardly know how; I feel as if I should be choked," replied the boy. "Oh dear! to think that I should see him at last, and you should be able to know that I have told you all the truth!"

"I never thought you had told us anything but the truth," said Rose, soothing him. "But what is this?—of whom do you speak?"

"I have seen the gentleman," replied Oliver, "the gentleman who was so good to me—Mr. Brownlow, that we have so often talked about."

"Where?" asked Rose.

"Getting out of a coach," replied Oliver, shedding tears of delight, "and going into a house. I didn't speak to him—I couldn't speak to him, for he didn't see me, and I trembled so, that I was not able to go up to him. But Giles asked for me, whether he lived there, and they say he did. Look here," said Oliver, opening a scrap of paper, "here it is; here's where he lives—I'm going there directly! Oh, dear me, dear me! what shall I do when I come to see him and hear him speak again!"

With her attention not a little distracted by these excla-

mations of joy, Rose read the address, which was Craven Street, in the Strand, and very soon determined upon turning the discovery to account.

"Quick!" she said, "tell them to fetch a hackney coach, and be ready to go with me. I will take you there, directly, without a minute's loss of time. I will only tell my aunt that we are going out for an hour, and be ready as soon as you are."

Oliver needed no prompting to despatch, and in little more than five minutes they were on their way to Craven Street. When they arrived there, Rose left Oliver in the coach, under pretence of preparing the old gentleman to receive him; and sending up her card by the servant, requested to see Mr. Brownlow on very pressing business. The servant soon returned, to beg that she would walk upstairs; and following him into an upper room, Miss Maylie was presented to an elderly gentleman of benevolent appearance, in a bottle-green coat. At no great distance from whom, was seated another old gentleman, in nankeen breeches and gaiters.

"Dear me," said the gentleman in the bottle-green coat, hastily rising with great politeness, "I beg your pardon, young lady—I imagined it was some importunate person who—I beg you will excuse me. Be seated, pray."

"Mr. Brownlow, I believe, sir?" said Rose, glancing from the other gentleman to the one who had spoken.

"That is my name," said the old gentleman. "This is my friend, Mr. Grimwig."

"I shall surprise you very much, I have no doubt," said Rose, "but you once showed great benevolence and goodness to a very dear young friend of mine, and I am sure you will take an interest in hearing of him again."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Brownlow.

"Oliver Twist you knew him as," replied Rose.

Mr. Brownlow was surprised. He drew his chair nearer to Miss Maylie's, and said :

"My dear young lady, if you have it in your power to produce any evidence which will alter the unfavourable opinion I was once induced to entertain of that poor child, in Heaven's name put me in possession of it."

"A bad one! I'll eat my head if he is not a bad one," growled Mr. Grimwig.

"He is a child of a noble nature and a warm heart," said Rose colouring.

"Do not heed my friend, Miss Maylie," said Mr. Brownlow; "he does not mean what he says."

"Yes he does," growled Mr. Grimwig.

"No, he does not," said Mr. Brownlow.

"He'll eat his head, if he doesn't," growled Mr. Grimwig.

"Now, Miss Maylie," said Mr. Brownlow, "to return to the subject. Will you let me know what intelligence you have of this poor child?"

L. A HAPPY MEETING.

ROSE, who had had time to collect her thoughts, at once related all that had befallen Oliver since he left Mr. Brownlow's house; concluding with the assurance that his only sorrow, for some months past, had been the not being able to meet with his former benefactor and friend.

"Thank God!" said the old gentleman. "This is great happiness to me; great happiness. But you have not told me where he is now, Miss Maylie. You must pardon my finding fault with you,—but why not have brought him?"

"He is waiting in a coach at the door," replied Rose.

"At this door!" cried the old gentleman. With which

he hurried out of the room, down the stairs, up the coach-steps, and into the coach, without another word.

Mr. Brownlow returned accompanied by Oliver, whom Mr. Grimwig received very graciously; and if the gratification of that moment had been the only reward for all her anxiety and care in Oliver's behalf, Rose Maylie would have been well repaid.

"There is somebody else who should not be forgotten, by-and-by," said Mr. Brownlow, ringing the bell. "Send Mrs. Bedwin here, if you please."

The old housekeeper answered the summons with all despatch; and dropping a curtsy at the door, waited for orders.

"Why, you get blinder every day, Bedwin," said Mr. Brownlow, rather testily.

"Well, that I do, sir," replied the old lady. "People's eyes, at my time of life, don't improve with age, sir."

"I could have told you that," rejoined Mr. Brownlow; "but put on your glasses, and see if you can't find out what you were wanted for, will you?"

The old lady began to rummage in her pocket for her spectacles. But Oliver's patience was not proof against this new trial; and yielding to his first impulse, he sprung into her arms.

"God be good to me!" cried the old lady, embracing him; "it is my innocent boy!"

"My dear old nurse!" cried Oliver.

"He would come back—I knew he would," said the old lady, holding him in her arms. "How well he looks, and how like a gentleman's son he is dressed again! Where have you been, this long, long while? Ah! the same sweet face, but not so pale; the same soft eye, put not so sad. I have never forgotten them or his quiet smile, but have seen them every day, side by side with those of my own dear

children, dead and gone since I was a lightsome young creature."

Running on thus, and now holding Oliver from her to mark how he had grown, now clasping him to her and passing her fingers fondly through his hair, the good soul laughed and wept upon his neck by turns.

Leaving her and Oliver Mr. Brownlow led the way into another room; and there, heard from Rose a full narration of her interview with Nancy, which occasioned him no little surprise and perplexity.

The old gentleman considered that she had acted prudently, and that Mrs. Maylie should be cautiously informed of all that had occurred. These preliminaries adjusted, Rose and Oliver returned home.

[Nancy met Rose Maylie on London Bridge as she had promised.

But the Jew, suspicious of her movements, sent some one, disguised, to follow her, and to find out where she went, and what she said. The spy was Oliver's old enemy, Noah Claypole, who had fallen into evil ways, and become friendly with Fagin.

When the Jew was told what had passed between Nancy and Miss Maylie, he was overwhelmed with rage, and with thoughts of revenge towards Nancy.]

LI. FAGIN BAFFLED.

It was nearly two hours before daybreak: that time, which, in the autumn of the year, may be truly called the dead of the night; when the streets are silent and deserted; it was at this still and silent hour, that the Jew sat watch-

ing in his old lair, with face so distorted and pale, and eyes so red and bloodshot, that he looked less like a man, than like some hideous phantom.

He sat crouching over a cold hearth, wrapped in an old torn coverlet, with his face turned towards a wasting candle that stood upon a table by his side. His right hand was raised to his lips, and as, absorbed in thought, he bit his long black nails, he disclosed among his toothless gums a few such fangs as should have been a dog's or rat's.

Mortification at the overthrow of his scheme: hatred of the girl who had dared to palter with strangers; the fear of detection, and ruin, and death; and a fierce and deadly rage kindled by all; these were the passionate considerations which shot through the brain of Fagin, as every evil thought and blackest purpose lay working at his heart.

He sat without changing his attitude in the least, or appearing to take the smallest heed of time, until his quick ear seemed to be attracted by a footstep in the street.

"At last," muttered the Jew, wiping his dry and fevered mouth. "At last!"

The bell rang gently as he spoke. He crept upstairs to the door, and presently returned accompanied by a man muffled to the chin, who carried a bundle under one arm. Sitting down, and throwing back his outer coat, the man displayed the burly frame of Sikes.

"There!" he said, laying the bundle on the table. "Take care of that, and do the most you can with it. It's been trouble enough to get: I thought I should have been here three hours ago."

Fagin laid his hand upon the bundle, and locking it in the cupboard, sat down again without speaking. But he did not take his eyes off the robber, for an instant, during

this action ; and now that they sat over against each other, face to face, he looked fixedly at him, with his lips quivering, and his face so altered, that the housebreaker surveyed him with a look of real affright.

“ Wot now ? ” cried Sikes. “ Wot do you look at a man so for ? ”

The Jew raised his right hand, and shook his trembling forefinger in the air ; but his passion was so great, that the power of speech was for the moment gone.

LII. SIKES HEARS THE SPY'S STORY.

STRETCHED upon a mattress on the floor, lay Noah Claypole, fast asleep. The Jew, bending over the sleeper, hauled him into a sitting posture. When his name had been repeated several times, Noah rubbed his eyes, and, giving a heavy yawn, looked sleepily about him.

“ Tell me that again—once again, just for him to hear,” said the Jew, pointing to Sikes as he spoke.

“ Tell you what ? ” asked the sleepy Noah, shaking himself pettishly.

“ That about—NANCY,” said the Jew, clutching Sikes by the wrist, as if to prevent his leaving the house before he had heard enough.

“ You followed her ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ To London Bridge ? ”

“ Where she met two people ? ”

“ So she did.”

“ A gentleman, and a lady that she had gone to of her own accord before, who asked her to give up all her pals, and Monks first, which she did—and to describe him, which she did—and to tell her what house it was that we

meet at, and go to, which she did—and where it could be best watched from, which she did—and what time the people went there, which she did. She did all this. She told it all, every word, without a threat, without a murmur—she did—did she not?” cried the Jew, half mad with fury.

“All right,” said Noah, scratching his head. “That’s just what it was!”

“What did they say about last Sunday?” demanded the Jew.

“About last Sunday!” replied Noah, considering. “Why, I told you that before.”

“Again. Tell it again!” cried Fagin, tightening his grasp on Sikes, and brandishing his other hand aloft, as the foam flew from his lips.

“They asked her,” said Noah, who, as he grew more wakeful, seemed to have a dawning perception who Sikes was, “they asked her why she didn’t come last Sunday, as she promised. She said she couldn’t.”

“Why—why?” interrupted the Jew, triumphantly. “Tell him that.”

“Because she was forcibly kept at home by Bill, the man she had told them of before,” replied Noah.

“What more of him?” cried the Jew. “What more of the man she had told them of before? Tell him that, tell him that.”

“Why, that she couldn’t very easily get out of doors unless he knew where she was going to,” said Noah; “and so the first time she went to see the lady, she—ha! ha! ha! it made me laugh when she said it, that it did—she gave him a drink of laudanum.”

“Let me go!” cried Sikes, breaking fiercely from the Jew.

Flinging the old man from him, he rushed from the room, and darted, wildly and furiously, up the stairs.

"Bill, Bill!" cried the Jew, following him hastily.

"Let me out," said Sikes. "Don't speak to me; it's not safe. Let me out, I say."

"Hear me speak a word," rejoined the Jew, laying his hand upon the lock. "You won't be—"

"Well?" replied the other.

"You won't be—too—violent, Bill?" whined the Jew.

Sikes made no reply; but, pulling open the door, of which the Jew had turned the lock, dashed into the silent streets.

LIII. THE FLIGHT OF SIKES.

OF all bad deeds that, under cover of the darkness, had been committed within wide London's bounds since night hung over it, that was the worst. Of all the horrors that rose with an ill scent upon the morning air, that was the foulest and most cruel.

The sun—the bright sun, that brings back, not light alone, but new life, and hope, and freshness to man—burst upon the crowded city in clear and radiant glory. It lighted up the room where the murdered woman lay. It did. He tried to shut it out, but it would stream in. If the sight had been a ghastly one in the dull morning, what was it now, in all that brilliant light!

Preparations completed, he moved, backward, towards the door; dragging the dog with him. He shut the door softly, locked it, took the key, and left the house.

He crossed over, and glanced up at the window, to be sure that nothing was visible from the outside. There was the curtain still drawn, which she would have opened to admit the light she never saw again.

The glance was instantaneous. It was a relief to have

got free of the room. He whistled on the dog, and walked rapidly away.

He went through Islington; strode up the hill at Highgate on which stands the stone in honour of Whittington; turned down to Highgate Hill, unsteady of purpose, and uncertain where to go; struck off to the right again, almost as soon as he began to descend it; and taking the footpath across the fields, skirted Caen Wood, and so came out on Hampstead Heath. Traversing the hollow by the Vale of Health, he mounted the opposite bank, and crossing the road which joins the villages of Hampstead and Highgate, made along the remaining portion of the heath to the fields at North End, in one of which he laid himself down under a hedge, and slept.

Soon he was up again and away.

Where could he go, that was near and not too public, to get some meat and drink? Hendon. That was a good place, not far off, and out of most people's way. Thither he directed his steps,—running sometimes, and sometimes loitering at a snail's pace, or stopping altogether and idly breaking the hedges with his stick.

But when he got there, all the people he met—the very children at the doors—seemed to view him with suspicion. Back he turned again, without the courage to purchase bit or drop, though he had tasted no food for many hours; and once more he lingered on the Heath, uncertain where to go.

He wandered over miles and miles of ground, and still came back to the old place. Morning and noon had passed, and the day was on the wane, and still he rambled to and fro, and up and down, and round and round, and still lingered about the same spot. At last he got away, and shaped his course for Hatfield.

It was nine o'clock at night, when the man, quite tired out, and the dog, limping and lame from the unaccustomed

exercise, turned down the hill by the church of the quiet village, and plodding along the little street, crept into a small public-house, whose scanty light had guided him to the spot. There was a fire in the tap-room, and some country labourers were drinking before it. They made room for the stranger, but he sat down in the furthest corner, and ate and drank alone, or rather with his dog ; to whom he cast a morsel of food from time to time.

LIV. NO REST FOR SIKES.

SIKES at length took the road which leads from Hatfield to St. Albans.

He went on doggedly ; but as he left the town behind him, and plunged into the solitude and darkness of the road, he felt a dread and awe creeping upon him which shook him to the core. Every object before him, substance or shadow, still or moving, took the semblance of some fearful thing.

Let no man talk of murderers escaping justice, and hint that Providence must sleep. There were twenty score of violent deaths in one long minute of that agony of fear.

There was a shed in a field he passed, that offered shelter for the night. Before the door were three tall poplar trees, which made it very dark within ; and the wind moaned through them with a dismal wail. He *could not* walk on till daylight came again ; and here he stretched himself close to the wall—to undergo new torture.

And here he remained, in such terror, as none but he can know, trembling in every limb, and the cold sweat starting from every pore.

Suddenly he took the desperate resolution of going back to London.

"There's somebody to speak to there, at all events," he thought. "A good hiding-place, too. They'll never expect me there. Why can't I lay by for a week or so, and get abroad to France? I'll risk it."

He acted upon this impulse without delay, and choosing the least-frequented roads began his journey back, resolved to lie concealed within a short distance of the metropolis, and, entering it at dusk, to proceed straight to that part of it which he had fixed on for his destination.

The dog, though,—if any description of him were out, it would not be forgotten that the dog was missing, and had probably gone with him. This might lead to his apprehension as he passed along the streets. He resolved to drown him, and walked on, looking about for a pond: pick-up a heavy stone and tying it to his handkerchief as he went.

The animal looked up into his master's face while these preparations were making; and skulked a little farther in the rear than usual. When his master halted at the brink of a pool, and looked round to call him, he stopped outright.

"Do you hear me call? Come here!" cried Sikes.

The animal came up from the very force of habit; but as Sikes stooped to attach the handkerchief to his throat, he uttered a low growl and started back.

"Come back!" said the robber, stamping on the ground.

The dog wagged his tail, but moved not. Sikes made a running noose and called him again.

The dog advanced, retreated, paused an instant, turned, and scoured away at his hardest speed.

The man whistled again and again, and sat down and waited in the expectation that he would return. But no dog appeared, and at length he resumed his journey.



SIKES ATTEMPTING TO DESTROY HIS DOG.

LV. BACK TO LONDON.

NEAR to that part of the Thames on which the church at Rotherhithe abuts, where the buildings on the banks are dirtiest and the vessels on the river blackest with the dust of colliers and the smoke of close-built low-roofed houses, there exists at the present day the filthiest, the strangest, the most extraordinary of the many localities that are hidden in London, wholly unknown, even by name, to the great mass of its inhabitants.

In such a neighbourhood stands Jacob's Island, surrounded by a muddy ditch, six or eight feet deep and fifteen or twenty wide when the tide is in, once called Mill Pond, but known in these days as Folly Ditch.

In Jacob's Island the warehouses are roofless and empty ; the walls are crumbling down ; the windows are windows no more ; the doors are falling into the streets ; the chimneys are blackened, but they yield no smoke. Thirty or forty years ago it was a thriving place ; but now it is a desolate island indeed.

In an upper room of one of these houses—a detached house of fair size, ruinous in other respects, but strongly defended at door and window ; there were assembled three men, who sat for some time in profound and gloomy silence. One of these was Toby Crackit, another Mr. Chitling, and the third a robber of fifty years, whose nose had been almost beaten in, in some old scuffle, and whose face bore a frightful scar. This man was a returned transport, and his name was Kags.

While the men sat in silence with their eyes fixed upon the floor, a pattering noise was heard upon the stairs, and Sikes's dog bounded into the room. They ran to the win-

dow, down stairs and into the street. The dog had jumped in at an open window; he made no attempt to follow them, nor was his master to be seen.

"What's the meaning of this?" said Toby, when they had returned. "He can't be coming here. I—I—hope not."

"No," said Kags. "I think he's got out of the country, and left the dog behind."

This solution, appearing the most probable one, was adopted as the right; and the dog creeping under a chair, coiled himself up to sleep without more notice from anybody.

It being now dark, the shutter was closed, and a candle lighted and placed upon the table. The terrible events of the last two days had made a deep impression on all three, increased by the danger and uncertainty of their own position. They drew their chairs closer together, starting at every sound. They spoke little, and that in whispers, and were silent and awe-stricken.

They had sat thus some time, when suddenly was heard a hurried knocking at the door below.

"Young Bates," said Kags, looking angrily round, to check the fear he felt himself.

The knocking came again. No, it wasn't he. He never knocked like that.

Crackit went to the window, and shaking all over, drew in his head. There was no need to tell them who it was; his pale face was enough. The dog, too, was on the alert in an instant, and ran whining to the door.

"We must let him in," he said, taking up the candle.

"Isn't there any help for it?" asked the other man in a hoarse voice.

"None. He *must* come in."

"Don't leave us in the dark," said Kags, taking down a

candle from the chimney-piece, and lighting it, with such a trembling hand that the knocking was twice repeated before he had finished.

Crackit went down to the door, and returned followed by a man with the lower part of his face buried in a handkerchief, and another tied over his head under his hat. He drew them slowly off. Blanched face, sunken eyes, hollow cheeks, beard of three days' growth, wasted flesh, short thick breath; it was the very ghost of Sikes.

He laid his hand upon a chair which stood in the middle of the room, dragged it back close to the wall, and sat down.

Not a word had been exchanged. He looked from one to another. When his hollow voice broke silence, they all three started. They seemed never to have heard its tones before.

"How came that dog here?" he asked.

"Alone. Three hours ago."

"To-night's paper says that Fagin's taken. Is it true, or a lie?"

"True."

They were silent again.

LVI. PURSUIT!

"You that keep this house," said Sikes, turning his face to Crackit, "do you mean to sell me, or to let me lie here till this hunt is over?"

"You may stop here, if you think it safe," returned the person addressed, after some hesitation.

Sikes carried his eyes slowly up the wall behind him, and said:—

"Who's that knocking?"

Crackit intimated, by a motion of his hand as he left the room, that there was nothing to fear; and directly came back with Charley Bates behind him. Sikes sat opposite the door, so that the moment the boy entered the room he encountered his figure.

"Toby," said the boy, falling back, as Sikes turned his eyes towards him, "why didn't you tell me this, down-stairs?"

The wretched man nodded, and made as though he would shake hands with him.

"Let me go into some other room," said the boy, retreating still farther.

"Charley!" said Sikes, stepping forward, "don't you—don't you know me?"

"Don't come nearer me," answered the boy, still retreating, and looking, with horror in his eyes, upon the murderer's face. "You monster!"

The man stopped half-way, and they looked at each other; but Sikes's eyes sunk gradually to the ground.

"Witness you three," cried the boy, shaking his clenched fist, and becoming more and more excited as he spoke. "Witness you three—I'm not afraid of him—if they come here after him, I'll give him up; I will. I tell you out at once. He may kill me for it if he likes, or if he dares, but if I'm here I'll give him up. Murder! Help! If there's the pluck of a man among you three, you'll help me. Murder! Help! Down with him!"

Pouring out these cries, the boy actually threw himself, single-handed, upon the strong man, and in the suddenness of his surprise, brought him heavily to the ground.

The three spectators seemed quite stupefied. They offered no interference, and the boy and man rolled on the ground together.

The contest, however, was too unequal to last long.

Sikes had him down, and his knee was on his throat, when Crackit pulled him back with a look of alarm, and pointed to the window. There were lights gleaming below, voices in loud and earnest conversation, the tramp of hurried footsteps—endless they seemed in number—crossing the nearest wooden bridge. The gleam of lights increased; the footsteps came more thickly and noisily on. Then came a loud knocking at the door, and then a hoarse murmur from such a multitude of angry voices as would have made the boldest quail.

“Help!” shrieked the boy in a voice that rent the air. “He’s here! Break down the door!”

“In the King’s name,” cried the voices without; and the hoarse cry rose again, but louder.

“Break down the door!” screamed the boy. “I tell you they’ll never open it. Run straight to the room where the light is. Break down the door!”

Strokes, thick and heavy, rattled upon the door and window-shutters as he ceased to speak.

“Open the door of some place where I can lock this screeching babe,” cried Sikes fiercely; running to and fro, and dragging the boy, now, as easily as if he were an empty sack. “That door. Quick!” He flung him in, bolted it, and turned the key. “Is the down-stairs door fast?”

“Double-locked and chained,” replied Crackit, who, with the other two men, still remained quite helpless and bewildered.

“Do your worst!” cried the desperate ruffian, throwing up the sash and menacing the crowd. “I’ll cheat you yet!”

LVII. NO ESCAPE.

OF all the terrific yells that ever fell on mortal ears, none could exceed the cry of the infuriated throng. Some shouted to those who were nearest to set the house on fire: others roared to the officers to shoot him dead.

Some called for ladders, some for sledge-hammers; some ran with torches to and fro as if to seek them, and still came back and roared again; some among the boldest attempted to climb up by the water-spout and crevices in the wall; and all waved to and fro, in the darkness beneath, like a field of corn moved by an angry wind: and joined from time to time in one loud furious roar.

"The tide," cried the murderer, as he staggered back into the room, and shut the faces out, "the tide was in as I came up. Give me a rope, a long rope. They're all in front. I may drop into the Folly Ditch, and clear off that way. Give me a rope."

The panic-stricken men pointed to where such articles were kept; the murderer, hastily selecting the longest and strongest cord, hurried up to the house-top.

He planted a board, which he had carried up with him for the purpose, so firmly against the door that it must be a matter of great difficulty to open it from the inside; and creeping over the tiles, looked over the low parapet.

The water was out, and the ditch a bed of mud.

The crowd had been hushed during these few moments, watching his motions and doubtful of his purpose, but the instant they perceived it and knew it was defeated, they raised a cry to which all their previous shouting had been whispers.

"They have him now!" cried a man on the nearest bridge. "Hurrah!"

"I will give fifty pounds," cried an old gentleman from the same quarter, "to the man who takes him alive. I will remain here till he comes to ask me for it."

There was another roar. At this moment the word was passed among the crowd that the door was forced at last.

The man had shrunk down, thoroughly quelled by the ferocity of the crowd, and the impossibility of escape; but seeing this sudden change with no less rapidity than it had occurred, he sprung upon his feet, determined to make one last effort for his life by dropping into the ditch, and, at the risk of being stifled, endeavouring to creep away in the darkness and confusion.

He set his foot against the stack of chimneys, fastened one end of the rope tightly and firmly round it, and with the other made a strong running noose by the aid of his hands and teeth, almost in a second. He could let himself down by the cord to within a less distance of the ground than his own height, and had his knife ready in his hand to cut it then and drop.

At the very instant when he brought the loop over his head, previous to slipping it beneath his arm-pits, he lost his balance, and tumbled over the parapet. He fell for five-and-thirty feet. There was a sudden jerk; and there he hung, lifeless against the wall.

LVIII. FAMILIAR SCENES.

THE events narrated in the last chapter were yet but two days old, when Oliver found himself, at three o'clock in the afternoon, in a travelling-carriage rolling fast towards his native town. Mrs. Maylie, and Rose, and Mrs. Bedwin, and the good doctor, were with him: and Mr. Brownlow

followed in a post-chaise, accompanied by one other person whose name had not been mentioned.

They had not talked much upon the way. Oliver was in a flutter of agitation and uncertainty, which deprived him of the power of collecting his thoughts, and almost of speech.

But if Oliver had remained silent while they journeyed towards his birthplace by a road he had never seen, what a crowd of emotions were wakened up in his breast, when they turned into that which he had traversed on foot: a poor houseless, wandering boy, without a friend to help him, or a roof to shelter his head.

"See there, there!" cried Oliver, eagerly clasping the hand of Rose, and pointing out at the carriage window; "there's the stile I came over; they are the hedges I crept behind for fear anyone should overtake me and force me back! Yonder is the path across the fields, leading to the old house where I was a little child! Oh, Dick, Dick, my dear old friend, if I could only see you now!"

"You will see him soon," replied Rose, gently taking his folded hands between her own. "You shall tell him how happy you are, and how rich you have grown, and that in all your happiness you have none so great as the coming back to make him happy too."

"Yes, yes," said Oliver, "and we'll—we'll take him away from here, and have him clothed and taught, and send him to some quiet country place where he may grow strong and well,—shall we?"

Rose nodded "yes," for the boy was smiling through such happy tears that she could not speak.

"You will be kind and good to him, for you are to every one," said Oliver. "It will make you cry, I know, to hear what he can tell; but never mind, never mind, it will be all over, and you will smile again—I know that

too—to think how changed he is ; you did the same with me. He said ‘God bless you!’ to me when I ran away,” cried the boy with a burst of affectionate emotion ; “and I will say ‘God bless *you*!’ now, and show him how I love him for it!”

As they approached the town, and at length drove through its narrow streets, it became matter of no small difficulty to restrain the boy within reasonable bounds.

There was Sowerberry’s the undertaker’s, just as it used to be, only smaller and less imposing in appearance than he remembered it—there were all the well-known shops and houses—there was Gamfield’s cart, the very cart he used to have, standing at the old public-house door—there was the workhouse, the dreary prison of his youthful days, with its dismal windows frowning on the street—there was the same lean porter standing at the gate, at sight of whom Oliver shrunk back, and then laughed at himself for being so foolish, then cried, then laughed again—there were scores of faces at the doors and windows that he knew quite well—there was nearly everything as if he had left it but yesterday, and all his recent life had been but a happy dream.

But it was pure, earnest, joyful reality. They drove straight to the door of the chief hotel (which Oliver used to stare up at, with awe, and think a mighty palace, but which had somehow fallen off in grandeur and size) : and here was Mr. Grimwig all ready to receive them. There was dinner prepared, and there were bed-rooms ready, and everything was arranged as if by magic.

[At the hotel, strange facts were revealed to Rose and Oliver. Mr. Brownlow, by dint of great trouble, had at last found out all about Oliver’s relatives.

As Nancy had made known the plot Monks laid with

the Jew, Mr. Brownlow was able to force from Monks the admission that he was living under a false name, and that Oliver was his half-brother. Monks admitted, too, that having accidentally found out who Oliver was, he had done his best to bring the child to ruin, in order to keep all the money left by their father.

It also came to light, that the younger sister of Oliver's mother was none other than Rose, who had already shown so much kindness to the poor boy.

The picture in Mr. Brownlow's room, which Oliver had seen during his illness, was his mother's portrait. It had been given to Mr. Brownlow by an old friend, who proved to be Oliver's father.]

LIX. PUNISHMENT OVERTAKES FAGIN.

THE court was paved, from floor to roof, with human faces. Inquisitive and eager eyes peered from every inch of space. All looks were fixed upon one man—the Jew.

He stood there, with one hand resting on the wooden slab before him, the other held to his ear, and his head thrust forward to enable him to catch every word that fell from the presiding judge, who was delivering his charge to the jury. He had scarcely moved since the trial began; and now that the judge ceased to speak, he still remained in the same strained attitude of close attention, with his gaze bent on him, as though he listened still.

A slight bustle in the court, recalled him to himself. Looking round, he saw that the jurymen had turned together, to consider of their verdict. As his eyes wandered to the gallery, he could see the people rising above each other to see his face. A few there were, who seemed un-

mindful of him, and looked only to the jury, in impatient wonder how they could delay. But in no one face—not even among the women, of whom there were many there—could he read the faintest sympathy with himself, or any feeling but one of all-absorbing interest that he should be condemned.

As he saw all this in one bewildered glance, the death-like stillness came again, and looking back, he saw that the jurymen had turned towards the judge. Hush!

He could glean nothing from their faces; they might as well have been of stone. Perfect stillness ensued—not a rustle—not a breath—"Guilty."

The building rang with a tremendous shout, and another, and another, and then it echoed deep loud groans, that gathered strength as they swelled out like angry thunder. It was a peal of joy from the populace outside, greeting the news that he would die on Monday.

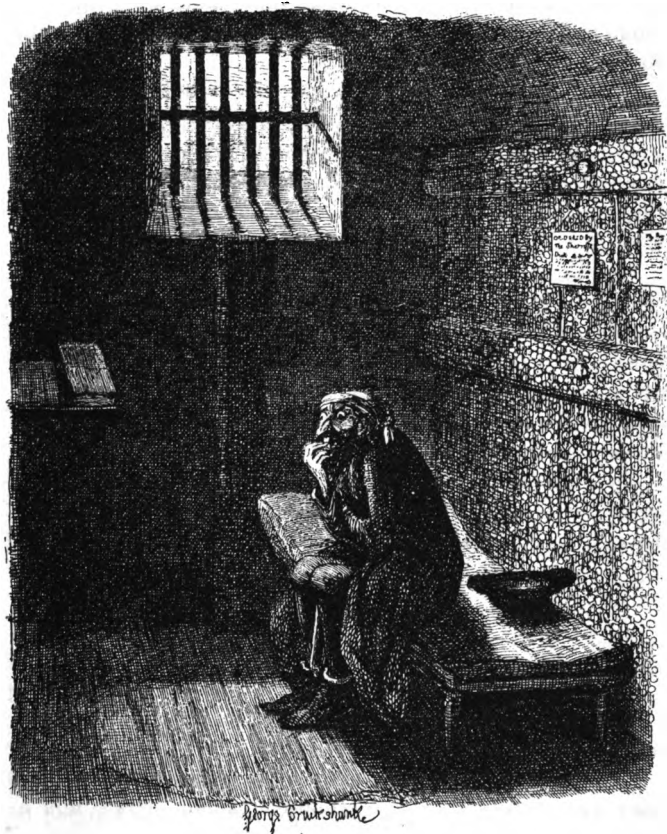
The jailer put his hand upon his arm, and beckoned him away. He gazed stupidly about him for an instant, and obeyed.

They led him through a paved room under the court to one of the condemned cells, and left him there—alone.

He sat down on a stone bench opposite the door, which served for seat and bedstead; and tried to collect his thoughts. After awhile, he began to remember a few fragments of what the judge had said: though it had seemed to him, at the time, that he could not hear a word. These gradually fell into their proper places, and by degrees suggested more: so that in a little time he had the whole, almost as it was delivered. To be hanged by the neck, till he was dead—that was the end. To be hanged by the neck till he was dead.

At length, when his hands were raw with beating against the heavy door and walls, two men appeared: one bearing

a candle which he thrust into an iron candlestick fixed against the wall; the other dragging in a mattress on



FAGIN IN THE CONDEMNED CELL.

which to pass the night; for the prisoner was to be left alone no more.

Then came night—dark, dismal, silent night.

The day passed off—day! There was no day; it was gone as soon as come—and night came on again; night so long, and yet so short; long in its dreadful silence, and short in its fleeting hours.

Saturday night. He had only one night more to live. And as he thought of this, the day broke—Sunday.

He had spoken little to either of the two men, who relieved each other in their attendance upon him; and they, for their parts, made no effort to rouse his attention.

He cowered down upon his stone bed, and thought of the past. He had been wounded with some missiles from the crowd on the day of his capture, and his head was bandaged with a linen cloth. His red hair hung down upon his bloodless face: his beard was torn, and twisted into knots; his eyes shone with a terrible light; his unwashed flesh crackled with the fever that burnt him up.

Those dreadful walls of Newgate, which have hidden so much misery and such unspeakable anguish, never held so dread a spectacle as that.

LX. NO ESCAPE FOR HIM.

Mr Brownlow and Oliver presented an order of admission to the prisoner, signed by one of the sheriffs. They were immediately admitted into the lodge.

"Is the young gentleman to come too, sir?" said the man whose duty it was to conduct them. "It's not a sight for children, sir."

"It is not indeed, my friend," rejoined Mr. Brownlow; "but my business with this man is intimately connected with him; and as this child has seen him in the full career

of his success and villainy, I think it well—even at the cost of some pain and fear—that he should see him now.”

These few words had been said apart, so as to be inaudible to Oliver. The man touched his hat; and glancing at Oliver with some curiosity, opened another gate, opposite to that by which they had entered, and led them on, through dark and winding ways, towards the cells.

The turnkey knocked at one of these with his bunch of keys. The two attendants, after a little whispering, came out into the passage, stretching themselves as if glad of the temporary relief, and motioned the visitors to follow the jailer into the cell. They did so.

The condemned criminal was seated on his bed, rocking himself from side to side, with a countenance more like that of a snared beast than the face of a man. His mind was evidently wandering to his old life, for he continued to mutter, without appearing conscious of their presence otherwise than as a part of his vision.

“Good boy, Charley—well done—” he mumbled—“Oliver, too, ha! ha! ha! Oliver, too—quite the gentleman now—quite the—take that boy away to bed!”

The jailer took the disengaged hand of Oliver, and, whispering him not to be alarmed, looked on without speaking.

“Oliver,” cried the Jew, beckoning to him. “Here, here! Let me whisper to you.”

“I am not afraid,” said Oliver in a low voice, as he relinquished Mr. Brownlow’s hand.

“I want to talk to you, my dear; I want to talk to you.”

“Yes, yes,” returned Oliver. “Let me say a prayer. Do! Let me say one prayer—say only one, upon your knees with me, and we will talk till morning.”

“Outside, outside,” replied the Jew, pushing the boy before him towards the door, and looking vacantly over his

head. "Say I've gone to sleep—they'll believe *you*. You can get me out, if you take me so. Now then, now then!"

"Oh! God forgive this wretched man!" cried the boy, with a burst of tears.

"That's right, that's right," said the Jew. "That'll help us on. This door first. If I shake and tremble as we pass the gallows, don't you mind, but hurry on. Now, now, now!"

"Have you nothing else to ask him, sir?" inquired the turnkey.

"No," replied Mr Brownlow. "If I hoped we could recall him to a sense of his position——"

"Nothing will do that, sir," replied the man, shaking his head. "You had better leave him."

The door of the cell opened, and the attendants returned.

"Press on, press on," cried the Jew. "Softly, but not so slow. Faster, faster!"

The men laid hands upon him, and disengaging Oliver from his grasp, held him back. He struggled with the power of desperation for an instant, and then sent up cry upon cry, that rang in their ears until they reached the open yard.

It was some time before they left the prison. Oliver nearly swooned after this frightful scene, and was so weak that for an hour or more, he had not the strength to walk.

LXI. CLOSING WORDS.

The fortunes of those who have figured in this tale are nearly closed. The little that remains to relate, is told in few and simple words.

Before three months had passed, Rose and Harry Maylie

were married in the village church which was henceforth to be the scene of the young clergyman's labours.

Mr. Brownlow adopted Oliver as his own son. Removing with him and the old housekeeper to within a mile of the parsonage-house, where his dear friends resided, he gratified the only remaining wish of Oliver's warm and earnest heart.

Mr. and Mrs. Bumble, deprived of their situations, were gradually reduced to great indigence and misery, and finally became paupers in that very same workhouse in which they had once lorded it over others.

Master Charles Bates, appalled by Sikes's crime, fell into a train of reflection whether an honest life was not, after all, the best. Arriving at the conclusion that it certainly was, he turned his back upon the scenes of the past, resolved to amend it in some new sphere of action. He struggled hard, and succeeded in the end; and, from being a farmer's drudge, and a carrier's lad, is now the merriest young grazier in all Northamptonshire.

How Mr. Brownlow went on, from day to day, filling the mind of his adopted child with stores of knowledge, and becoming attached to him more and more,—how the two orphans, tried by adversity, remembered its lessons in mercy to others, and mutual love, and thanks to Him who had protected and preserved them—these are all matters which need not to be told.

LIST OF THE MORE DIFFICULT WORDS.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. au-thor-i-ties
ju-ve-nile
pa-rent-al
su-per-in-ten-dence
lux-u-ri-ant
at-trib-ut-ed
par-tic-i-pat-ing
sal-u-ta-tion
de-pos-it-ed
per-spi-ra-tion</p> | <p>ex-cite-ment
de-pict-ed
con-vinced</p> | <p>sig-nifi-i-cant-ly
san-c-tion</p> |
| <p>2. bap-tised
in-ter-posed
ma-jes-tic
coun-te-nance
as-sist-ants
in-quir-ing</p> | <p>5. com-mis-sion
con-signed
en-count-ered
pe-rused
doc-u-ment
di-et-a-ry
con-des-cend-ing
lin-gered
im-pu-ta-tion
oc-curred
pre-mi-um
in-dent-ures
sig-na-ture
ap-prov-al</p> | <p>8. de-spatched
pa-ro-chi-al
ar-ranged
sit-u-a-tion
e-vinced
e-mo-tion
des-ti-na-tion
ex-pe-di-ent
trem-u-lous
ma-lig-ni-ty
a-maze-ment</p> |
| <p>3. as-tound-ed
in-tel-li-gence
lin-ger-ing
hes-i-tat-ing
ex-tra-or-di-na-ry
un-con-scious-ly
mar-vel-lous-ly
ed-u-cated
oak-um
il-lus-tra-tion</p> | <p>6. as-ton-ish-ment
re-leased
tre-men-dous
pit-e-ous-ly
or-phan
ma-gis-trate
ap-pren-ticed
pe-rus-ing
par-tial-ly
o-bei-sance
in-ti-mate
dog-ged-ly
spec-ta-cles</p> | <p>9. e-merged
pet-tish-ly
slat-tern-ly
glis-tened
neg-a-tive
af-firm-a-tive
tres-sels
at-mos-phere
des-o-late
sep-a-ra-tion</p> |
| <p>4. por-rin-ger
op-er-a-tion
de-vour-ed
ap-pe-tites
u-ni-form
whis-pered
des-per-ate
te-mer-i-ty
stu-pe-fied
par-a-lysed
pin-ioned</p> | <p>7. crit-i-cal
en-count-ered
ter-ri-fied
re-pul-sive
vi-o-lent-ly
so-lem-ni-ty</p> | <p>10. de-sist-ed
mon-strous
su-pe-ri-ors
con-tin-u-a-tion
de-scend-ing
ad-min-is-tered
dig-ni-fied
gra-cious-ly
pre-dic-tion
scorn-ful-ly
re-served</p> |
| | | <p>11. ac-quired
mea-sles</p> |

- pro-ces-sions
 ad-mi-ra-tion
 jeal-ous-y
 ban-quet
 en-sued
 ag-gra-vat-ing
 an-noy-ance
 ma-li-cious
 im-pu-dent
 em-bold-ened
 de-ject-ed
 at-ti-tude
 syll-a-ble
 ac-com-pa-ny
 pom-melled
 daunt-ed
 prob-a-ble
 as-ton-ish-ed
12. im-pos-ing
 ag-i-tat-ed
 writhed
 va-ri-e-ty
 a-cut-est
 lam-ent-a-tions
 au-da-cious
 be-nign-ly
 ad-just-ed
13. un-di-min-ish-ed
 im-pres-sive
 re-ceive-ing
 med-i-ta-tion
 e-jac-u-lat-ed
 ceil-ing
 be-stow-al
 junc-ture
 cal-cu-lat-ed
 re-bel-lious
14. scowled
 un-dis-mayed
 al-ter-na-tive
 com-pli-men-tary
 con-tempt
 cau-tious-ly
 lis-tened
 in-tent-ly
15. crev-i-ces
 ap-pear-ance
 fea-tures
 in-voked
16. ter-mi-nat-ed
 pur-sued
 in-ti-ma-tion
 trudged
 dis-mal-ly
 be-nev-o-lent
 draughts
 re-lieved
17. a-roused
 sur-vey-ing
 ear-nest-ly
 queer-est
 ap-par-ent-ly
 cor-du-roy
 prem-i-ses
 as-sur-ance
 re-ferred
 di-a-logue
 scud-ded
18. con-duct-or
 ac-quaint-ed
 saus-a-ges
 shriv-elled
 vil-lain-ous
 re-puls-ive
 as-so-ci-ate
 bois-ter-ous
19. spright-ly
 ad-dress-ing
 pro-duc-ing
 in-spect-ing
 fur-nished
 es-pe-cial-ly
20. lan-guish
 oc-ca-sions
 en-treat-ing
 per-mis-sion
 guard-i-an
 saunt-er-ing
- in-struct-ed
 de-ceive
 e-merg-ing
 stealth-i-ly
 mys-ter-y
 con-fused
 dep-re-dat-or
 cit-i-zens
21. mag-ic
 jost-ling
 pur-su-ers
 mur-mured
 lub-ber-ly
 anx-ious-ly
 con-tem-plat-ed
 seized
 pas-sion-ate-ly
 con-ve-ni-ent
 tri-umph
 for-tu-nate-ly
 in-no-cent
22. con-vuls-ing
 trav-ersed
 in-sen-si-ble
 pal-lid
 ut-tered
 with-ered
 whis-pered
23. com-plete-ly
 ex-haust-ed
 sat-is-fied
 nat-u-ral
 qual-i-fied
 ap-prov-al
 se-ries
 cir-cles
 re-flec-tion
 lan-guid
 in-tri-cate
 fer-vent-ly
 cri-sis
 di-sease
 con-sid-er-a-ble
 vi-o-lent-ly
 ap-plied

24. por-trait
hu-moured
ex-claimed
ner-vous
dis-tinct-ly
swal-low-ed
con-tor-tions
nou-rish-ment
em-pha-sis
pre-cise-ly
mi-nut-est
ac-cu-ra-cy
25. prop-er-ly
in-ter-posed
re-joined
de-ceived
en-deav-oured
ut-ter-ance
26. at-ti-tude
sur-geon
re-treat-ing
ab-rupt-ly
at-tached
gra-cious-ly
con-clu-sion
pro-vok-ing
27. pur-chased
par-tic-u-lar-ly
eag-er-ly
con-tra-dic-tion
con-fi-dent
val-u-a-ble
dis-cer-i-ble
28. lam-en-ta-tions
em-braced
hys-ter-i-cal
a-noint-ed
char-ac-ters
ir-re-pres-si-ble
vol-umes
ap-prov-ing
ad-min-is-ter
seiz-ing
vil-lain
29. slack-en-ed
hes-i-tat-ed
un-oc-cu-pied
con-scious
ru-in-ous
cau-tious-ly
cer-e-mo-ny
fa-mil-iar
30. ec-sta-sy
viewed
be-wil-dered
hu-mil-i-ty
re-laxed
mer-ri-ment
pas-sion-ate
des-per-a-tion
psalm
pros-e-cute
fier-ce-ly
31. whirl-ing
com-pressed
al-ter-nate-ly
dis-con-cert-ed
ad-ja-cent
com-plied
32. par-a-graph
ad-ver-tise-ment
ab-scond-ed
en-ticed
ut-tered
re-sumed
33. re-flec-tion
te-di-ous
vi-cious
treach-er-y
ter-mi-nat-ed
ca-reer
fa-vour-a-ble
en-er-get-i-cal-ly
guin-eas
34. im-pos-tor
in-dig-nant-ly
feign-ing
bur-gla-ry
34. sur-prised
res-i-dence
par-ry-ing
op-por-tu-ni-ty
pon-dered
crim-i-nals
ap-pall-ing
trem-u-lous
af-fect-ing
35. con-ceived
whis-per-ing
anx-i-e-ty
toil-et
at-tired
36. ken-nels
grad-u-al-ly
per-pet-u-al-ly
el-bowed
tur-moil
re-laxed
in-ter-pos-ing
sig-nif-i-cant
37. ex-pe-di-tion
mur-mured
vig-or-ous-ly
lat-tice
suf-ficed
fal-tered
re-leas-ing
38. stealth-i-ly
ter-ri-fied
vis-ion
stag-gered
sen-sa-tion
vi-brat-ed
fu-ri-ous-ly
pros-trate
whirl-ing

39. a-gree-a-ble
con-tra-dict
ad-mis-sions
ca-pac-i-ty
40. un-whole-some
in-sen-si-ble
sat-u-rat-ed
com-pas-sion
fal-ter-ing
por-ti-co
41. re-cruit-ing
fa-tigues
il-lus-trat-ed
as-sum-ing
se-ren-i-ty
sur-vey-ing
prob-a-bly
ap-peal-ing
tim-or-ous-ly
for-mi-da-ble
val-iant-ly
ex-cite-ment
ap-ply-ing
quelled
con-sta-ble
42. dis-en-gaged
cer-e-mo-ny
ruf-fi-an
en-shrine
mourn-ful-ly
with-ered
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